

# Problems of Human Adjustment

REVISED EDITION

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*To Franci*



## CONTENTS

<i>Foreword to the First Edition</i>	ix
<i>Foreword to the Revised Edition</i>	xi
<b>1.</b> Introduction	1
<b>2.</b> Man the Animal	9
<b>3.</b> Emotional Living	27
<b>4.</b> Mind-Body	62
<b>5.</b> Realistic Living	97
<b>6.</b> The Road to Neurosis	124
<b>7.</b> The Main Problems of Life	170
<b>8.</b> Sanity in Sex	193
<b>9.</b> Courtship and Marriage	229
<b>10.</b> Happiness in Work	262
<b>11.</b> The Search for God	301
<b>12.</b> Maturity in Old Age	341
<b>13.</b> A Realistic Outlook on Life	378
<i>Index</i>	415



## FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION

THIS BOOK is an outgrowth of a decade of work with people and with the problems they encounter as they live. As in all areas of life, man finds kinship in the mutuality of experience in coping with the problems of life. College student, professional person, industrialist, factory or clerical worker—in fact all mankind—must face and resolve certain fundamental issues of living. The thesis here presented is that these issues attain problem status only when man attempts to meet them with inadequate preparation. It is his own inefficient techniques of solution that make his adjustment to reality ineffective for *him*. Basically, human beings fail to cope with life adequately because they have not applied available knowledge in their own life practices.

This volume represents, in organized form, the concepts I have found to work when the attempt is made to introduce man to himself. Whether in the classroom, the office, the factory or the clinic, it has been my experience that the approach taken here permits man to obtain the *sine qua non* of good adjustment—self-understanding. Only when behavior is projected upon a basis of clear personal insight does it partake of the efficiency and effectiveness requisite for happy living. Self-understanding and its counterpart, self-acceptance, are fundamental to adequate adjustment.

In acknowledgment for assistance given during the preparation of this volume, my debts are legion. First, I wish to express deep gratitude to my parents, Mayme L. and Charles H. Steckle, who, by the example set, introduced me to the values inherent in facing life squarely and unafraid. Dr. L. I. O'Kelly read the manuscript and gave unstintingly of his wide store of knowledge. I probably shall never be able to

*x Foreword to the First Edition*

discharge my obligation to him. Dr. S. R. Wallace read portions of the manuscript and assisted me over many a hurdle in thinking. Mr. Alvin Pitcher gave freely of his time and energy while I was struggling with the chapter on Religion. The Misses Barbara Etzel and Patricia Knight rendered invaluable service in helping me to express myself in a form meaningful to youth. I am similarly indebted to all my students who helped, sometimes in brutal fashion, to clarify my thinking. I am also indebted to the men in the Fiberglas Corporation and the Newark Stove Company who aided me in making the phraseology comprehensible.

Finally, I wish to offer, in partial payment of my greatest debt of all, my heartfelt gratitude to the one on whose support, both as a person and as a psychologist, I lean most heavily. To my wife, Franci, the least of whose contributions was the typing of the manuscript, and whose cheerful encouragement gave me strength to try again, I say, with all the futility of words adequately to express feeling: "Thank you."

LYNDE C. STECKLE

*Cleveland, Ohio*  
*July, 1949*

## FOREWORD TO THE REVISED EDITION

IN THE years that have passed since this book first was published, many things have happened to me. I have moved from a psychologist in the academic realm into the role of a consulting psychologist in the business world. In this process, earlier attitudes have undergone change and some convictions have been rudely shaken. In all, it has been a healthy experience

This revision embodies an effort to bring the basic material closer to "reality" as well as to say things in somewhat simpler fashion. Incorporated also are many of the experiences of the past eight years. Any attempt to credit the men and the organizations who have been instrumental in these would involve a long, long list. Perhaps those most responsible are my partners in William, Lynde and Williams. Therefore, in deep gratitude for tolerance and understanding as a college professor has emerged into a professional business associate, let me express my appreciation to Dr. W. E. Brown, Dr. R. W. Henderson, Dr. W. H. E. Geiger, and Dr. L. E. Saddler. Beyond shadow of doubt, these are good men and true. In particular, I wish to say that Dr. Lawrence I. O'Kelly of the University of Illinois has been of tremendous help to me. On his willing and able shoulder I have poured out many a fear and frustration as I was torn between my first love, teaching, and the undeniable challenge of putting knowledge to work.

LYNDE C. STECKLE

*Painesville, Ohio*  
*October, 1956*





# PROBLEMS OF HUMAN ADJUSTMENT

Chaos of thought and passion, all confused  
Still by himself abused or disabused;  
Created half to rise, and half to fall;  
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all;  
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurled,—  
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world.

—Alexander Pope, *Essay on Man*

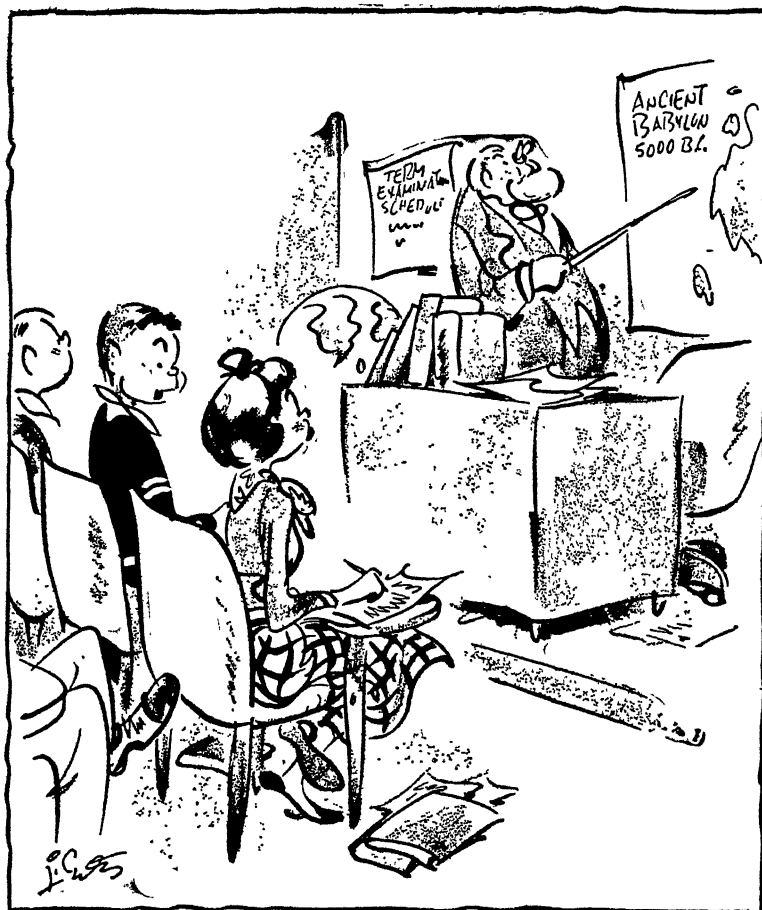
# 1. INTRODUCTION

We are the ancients of the earth  
And in the morning of the times.

—Tennyson, *L'envoi*

**W**HY IS IT THAT WE HUMANS HAVE SO MUCH TROUBLE with ourselves? We can find all sorts of answers but very few solutions. It is easy to point out that life has become complex and that the demands made upon us often exceed our ability to meet them. Usually, this answer describes the hustle and bustle of modern living in contrast to the placid existence of our grandfathers. I think, however, that if we examine ourselves closely, we discover that whether jet planes, hydrogen bombs, economic-political arguments, or what all are more disturbing than questions of how to get the back forty in shape for sowing or who is going to slop the hogs depends upon the person and not so much upon the things. We must admit, of course, that greater demands need greater abilities and also that personal demands have increased as living has become more complicated. Yet, most of us have ample ability to meet most of the demands that may be made of us. Why then, do we find life too much with us?

The answer to this question as well as the solution to the problem raised is to be found in you, yourself. You, as a member in good standing of the human race, have within you both the hope and the despair of mankind. You have an ancient, if not an honorable, history. You go back in time hundreds of thousands of years. As much as 30,000 years ago you were a highly intelligent being. You painted, you created, you dreamed. You were a fine physical being with the potential brain power that you have today. In many ways, you were a



*"I didn't know civilization was THAT old! . . . it sure doesn't act that way."*

FIGURE 1. Reproduced by permission of the artist, George Lichty, and the Chicago Sun-Times Syndicate.

*big man*. You have a long history of highly superior intellectual ability in comparison to other animals. *Why* have you not used this ability to make a world free from fear, want, war, crime, and unhappiness? What happened?

Nothing much really—and perhaps that is the gist of the trouble. Nothing much has happened to man himself throughout these ages. Tremendous things have happened to the world about him; things that man himself has made;<sup>1</sup> from caves to modern ranch homes, from a constantly tended fire to electronic cooking, from shank's mare to jets and rockets, from clubs to atomic bombs, from holes drilled in skulls to automatic hearts, from grunts to Esperanto—literally from there to here. Unfortunately, as man has devised countless ways to make life both more convenient and more lethal for himself, he has done it with the same internal make-up that he had when first he appeared as a thinking being. Inwardly, he has not changed at all.

This is the center of the issue. Remember, if you will, that the man in a cave faced an entirely different kind of life than does the man in a ranch house. When the cave man got up in the morning it was even money whether he would live to see the sun set. When he walked out to find food, he had an equal chance of being food himself. If he lived he had to be quicker, faster, or more wily than his four-footed competitors for existence. It is reasonable, I believe, to assume that those men whose internal make-up was of such a caliber that they could survive under the law of the tooth and the talon would tend to perpetuate themselves in their children. Those whose inner reactions were sluggish became meat. Over time then, there would emerge a kind of man best able to live under conditions that demanded quick and sustained action. Life in the days of the cave insisted upon the ability to meet physical threat and emergency. Life was simple indeed; you either lived or you died.

<sup>1</sup> Man's technology can be traced back at least a half million years! See C. Singer, E. Holmyard, and A. Hall (eds.), *A History of Technology*, Oxford University Press, 1954.

**THREATS, REAL AND IMAGINED**

What happened to keep man alive? Let us look inside his body briefly to see what we may see. We discover that nature has given man (along with all other animals) a protective device that goes into action whenever man faces danger. Certain physiological changes occur; changes over which man himself has little control, but changes that convert his body from a peacetime to a wartime economy. This happened for the man in the cave and it still happens for the man in the ranch house. All of us carried, and still carry, a bodily process designed to protect us in emergency situations. As the snarl of a charging saber-toothed tiger aroused these internal reactions in the cave man, so likewise does the threat of danger arouse them in us. To our *bodies*, it makes no difference at all that *now* the "threat" may be personal or social insult rather than actual physical harm. Whenever we *feel* threatened—for whatever reason—a series of unwilled bodily events occur.

Now the physiological purpose of these events is to prepare our bodies for violent, physical action; action that may endure over long and bloody time. Yet, in our everyday life, we engage in very little bloodletting. Nevertheless, when we become emotionally aroused, our bodies behave as though we were about to engage in a duel to the death. When we consider that this internal reaction may well appear because a neighbor wears a hat exactly like ours, our ace is trumped, the promotion goes to a working associate, or family expenditure exceeds the budget, we can understand that it is this biologic hang-over from prehistoric time that keeps so many of us so very much upset.

These internal changes that occur when we are emotionally disturbed are pretty tremendous. Whenever we feel threatened, whether it be one of insult or injury, automatic things happen inside us. Some of these things are: our liver releases its store of sugar so that fuel for our body is abundantly available, our heart beats faster and much more strongly, our blood pressure leaps higher, and the blood itself is sent pounding to our muscles; our digestive processes practically cease. These

and other changes take place and all are designed to prepare us for violent and enduring action.

For the man in a cave, such preparation had real and obvious advantage. That such advantage still is gained becomes much of a question. How often nowadays must you fight for your life in physical terms? How often must you live with emergency? How often do you face death? It is most doubtful that to have your body go into a wartime economy serves any efficient purpose in helping you to get along with the problems you face. In all probability, as you face most current threats in life, the existence of this internal emergency reaction but increases your difficulty the instant it comes into play.

Except for the specific purpose for which it developed (to enable the body to live through periods of physical emergency), emotional behavior is disorganized behavior. In meeting the problems of today, emotion hinders rather than helps. Well you know that the madder you get, the more you find later to regret. Why? Because in the throes of surging anger you do and say things that make you sorry later. This means that when feeling is high, thinking is low; when you're mad, you can't think straight.

Now if emotion and misbehavior vary together—as indeed they do—we face real difficulty. Life is full of “threats”; threats to our social position, to our job, to our position in the community, to our reputations, to our friendships, and our loves. If to threat we must make emotional response (and physiologically we have no choice), we are caught in a bind indeed. A few examples: the employee who gets angry when the boss criticizes his work does not regain his job effectiveness for sometime; when wife cannot resist the new hat and violates the budget, things are tense for a while; when husband drives up in the new car and the money for the cruise is gone, life gets rough, and the problem is not exactly “thought through.” An unnecessary accident took place because a driver screamed and covered her face with her hands just before two cars collided. This illustrates beautifully what we call the “primitive retreat reaction of fear” but was in nowise helpful to either car or occupant.

## 6 Problems of Human Adjustment

You would think, I am sure, that with his centuries on earth, man would have learned how to control his emotions and to prevent their harassing him. Surely he has the intelligence to do so and the products of his mind are fabulous. Right on both counts! *But*, the catch is that mental ability is only a part of the picture. Remember that these bodily changes that occur as we become emotionally upset are *automatic* and *unwilled* reactions to threat. It therefore becomes much easier to *feel* than to *think*. Now you and I along with all other animals will follow the line of least resistance when we can. Consequently, we often become emotional when we ought to be thinking just because it is much easier to do so. Thinking is hard work and to superimpose thought upon emotional feeling is harder still so most of us just let nature take its course.<sup>2</sup>

### THE STRENGTH OF EMOTION

Declaim though we may about man's intellectual potential, we cannot escape the realities that emotion has brought us. Read any daily paper for evidence of the strength of emotion in the life of man. Do you find reports on crime, divorce, war, general human unhappiness and dissatisfaction? Are these evidences of man's intelligence or of his emotionalized insistence upon the things he *wants* instead of the things he *knows* he should have? May we not say with some justice that in many ways we try to meet the demands of modern living with Stone Age techniques?

One big reason for this lies in the fact that the development of our bodies simply has not kept pace with our development of things. We try to face the delays, the regulations, the subordinations of today with the inner make-up of a million yesterdays. We face modern demands with a body designed for existence in a jungle where desire and fulfillment are identical provided only that we are strong enough to take what we want. Yet we know that commonly we must postpone gratifi-

<sup>2</sup> If you question the superficiality of our cultural veneer, read E. Crankshaw, *Gestapo: Instrument of Tyranny*, New York, Viking, 1956.



cation, we must deny our desire, we must "wait until we can pay for it." *We* know this, but our *bodies* do not.

When threat to our persons or to our personalities faces us, our bodies mobilize their energies for *action*—action that, more often than not, cannot be taken. It should not surprise you therefore, that these energies, mobilized but inexpendable should stew around within us and create all sorts of internal trouble. Internal trouble keeps us stirred up and inefficient as we try to answer a problem that we really should solve. You should also not be surprised that the results of such continued internal upheavals should be growing irritability, fatigue, nervousness, discontent, or even actual illness itself. In fact, you will see that the accumulated and unexpended energy of emotional living can express itself in the form of disease symptoms of many types. You will see that the "stirred up" condition that results from futile emotion leads us straight down the road to neurosis itself.

What we are going to do is this:

1. We shall look at the conditions under which such energy is mobilized.
2. We shall see how it finds outlet in feelings and behavior.
3. We shall discover what effects such outlets have upon us.
4. We shall search for what we can do to prevent damage.

Boiled down, we shall talk about man's struggle with himself. As we will discover, this has been a rather fruitless battle to date—not because it is hopeless but because we have insisted upon attacking our problems with antiquated weapons.

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## 2. MAN THE ANIMAL

I search for truth, by which man never yet  
was harmed  
But he is harmed who abideth on still in his  
ignorance.

—Marcus Aurelius, *Meditation*

**B**EFORE WE EMBARK UPON A SEARCH TO UNDERSTAND ourselves, we should find it desirable to examine some of the underlying facts of man's basic make-up. Unfortunately, we shall have to get under man's skin and look at his inner structure. Of course, this structure is tremendously complicated, we cannot examine it in detail, and we shall not try. We shall only hit a few high points in trying to see why, in a sense, man must behave as he does. If we can show that man's fundamental nature is an emotional one and that it is quite natural for him to feel rather than to think, we take a real step toward genuine understanding of ourselves. By extension therefore, we also take a giant step toward understanding our fellows. Suppose we look at some of man's inner anatomy projected on the simplest of screens.

Pictures portray more readily than words. Examine the one on the next page. Notice that in the brain of the cat, the ape, and of man certain similarities exist. The shaded portions we shall call the "old brain" because this part all animals have in common. Within it, as we shall see, lies the reason why man finds it so easy to give full play to his feelings, his wishes, his desires. Observe that the old brain makes up proportionately more and more of the total brain as we go down the scale from man to cat. (We could go farther down and show that this becomes increasingly true.) We may rightfully guess that the old brain plays more and more of a part in the life of the animal as

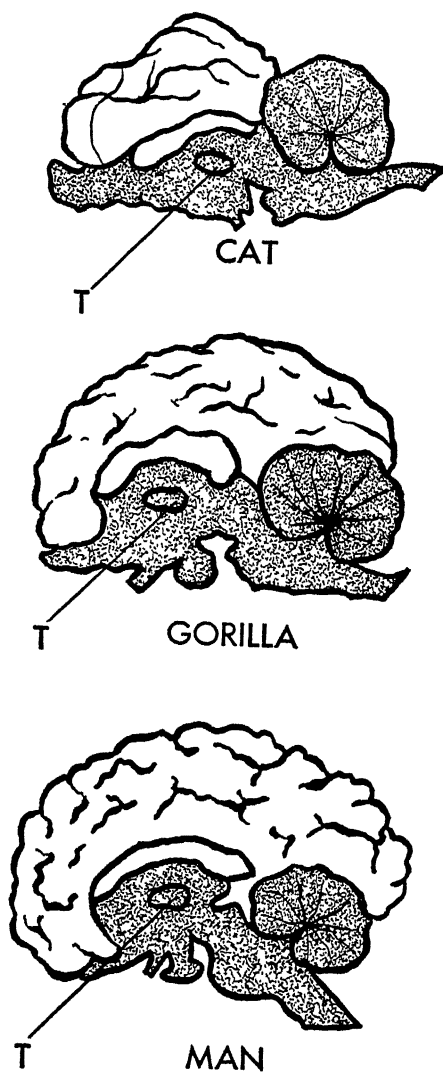


FIGURE 2. Longitudinal Sections of Brains of Cat, Ape, and Man, Showing Relative Proportions of Old and New Brain Tissue. In relation to the brain of man, the brain of the ape is enlarged about 3 times; the brain of the cat, 45 times.

its relative size increases. Despite the fact that in man the old brain is relatively at its smallest, it controls his behavior to a large degree.

Much of the old brain is devoted to maintaining the body and the body functions but a part of it has a great deal to do with our personal lives. This part we have labeled (T) and we call it the *thalamus*. This is small, of hickory nut size perhaps, but mighty in its influence on how we behave.

The lower part of this area especially has an important bearing upon our emotions and upon when and how we may express them. As example, if this area is artificially stimulated, cats show typical rage reactions and man reports that he felt "afraid," "disturbed," "upset." Furthermore, man shows physiological changes that are characteristic of his body functions when he actually is in an emotional state. If the area is removed (by surgery or disease), the cat becomes apathetic and listless. Man becomes dull, lethargic, and relatively disinterested. Neither cat nor man, when the thalamus is destroyed, shows much of any emotional *behavior*. It looks very much as though this area has greatly to do with the normal expression of feeling and emotion. In point of fact, it does.

All of us who have observed the growth of a dog from puppyhood to maturity know that significant changes take place in his behavior. When he is very young, his needs and their expression are synonymous. When he has to "go," he goes! When he is angered, he bites. When he is hungry, neither he nor his master rests until he is fed. As time goes on he learns or—as we say—he gets "housebroken." *Now*, there are places to "go," times to eat, and frustrations to be endured. Essentially, as we shall see, precisely similar changes occur in man as he also grows from infancy to adulthood. Unfortunately, as we also shall see, some of us never do get beyond the puppy stage where the control of our "needs" is concerned.

### **OLD BRAIN**

In a roundabout way, we have shown that emotional feeling is largely under old brain control. Furthermore, we have indicated that such feeling and its expression in behavior inti-

mately is connected and that only through "learning" does this primitive connection become lessened and controlled. Yet much of the intimacy remains. There is good reason why this should be so.

In the last chapter, we showed very briefly the kind of environment in which historic man spent his life. Under the jungle conditions that existed then, is it not reasonable to assume that bodily needs and the immediate expression of them in behavior were an essential for survival? Is it not equally likely that those early men in whom such expression was most immediate would tend to survive and hence procreate their kind? Since we strongly suspect that man's brain has endured relatively unchanged for at least some 30,000 years, might we not expect that much of this immediacy still lingers on and tends to function now just as it did then? Whether we expect this or not, the fact remains that the immediate expression of internal feeling is a huge reason why man has so much trouble with himself.

It is obvious that the old brain played a vital role in the life economy of man when he lived in a cave. Then it had highly significant and utilitarian value. It was important to life itself that inner feeling be expressed in behavior and the two went hand in hand. The animal, human or nonhuman, in primitive existence must have found identity between wish and fulfillment provided only that means of satisfaction were at hand and that the animal were strong enough to take it. The hungry animal ate, and ate without regard for what or who it was eating. When threatened, it fled or attacked immediately without thought for future consequences. We can hardly imagine the hungry tiger refraining from eating because some other animal had claimed property rights to food. Nor can we imagine the male ape stopping in his pursuit of a female in heat just because long ago others of his kind had laid down stringent regulations of the conditions under which intercourse may take place. Rather, we can believe that the behavior of such animals, largely guided by the old brain, was immediate, quite foresightless, and most concerned with the internal needs of the moment.

All well and good for cats and apes, but the picture itself shows that man has the smallest old brain of all animals proportionate to total brain mass. Does it not follow that in man the old brain has less significance in his behavior? Indeed it does—but—we must recognize that the old brain is only overlaid, it is not replaced. The new brain (unshaded areas) grew out of the old and is as intimately connected with it as a tree is with its roots. The old brain is still with us and it is still carrying out its functions although normally these functions are held in check by the overlying structures (newbrain). Over the ages, this new brain has increased in size while the old brain has remained relatively constant. In fact, it is within this new brain that the hope for man resides. Within it lies the potential for coöperative and rational behavior despite the *feeling* that may be induced by old brain activity.<sup>1</sup>

#### **NEW BRAIN**

The new brain serves as a check upon the functions of the old. In the normal, adult human when an impulse arises within the old brain, messages about it are sent up to the new and an "interpretation" is made. This interpretation occurs in the light of the person's past experience and in terms of what he knows to be acceptable behavior. Sending these messages takes time and so a period of delay is inserted between the arousal of a desire and its expression in behavior. During this delay, events occur that give rise to behavior that we call by such names as "judged," "foresightful," "intelligent," "thoughtful," "coöperative," "social." These terms mean that the person has weighed and balanced the desire against his past experience, his hope for the future, the relative values of the desire, and its consequences, and that the resulting behavior is *considered* behavior. It is this time for checking and considering that makes possible what we call "socialized" behavior in man with all the awareness for the rights of others

<sup>1</sup> J. Pfeiffer, *The Human Brain*, New York, Harper, 1955; Exploring the cerebral jungle, *New York Times Magazine*, May 13, 1956, p. 26; F. Bello, New light on the brain, *Fortune*, January, 1955, p. 104.

#### 14 Problems of Human Adjustment

that the term implies. Modern, adult man therefore behaves not only in terms of what he *wants* but also in terms of what he *knows* he should have. At least, he can so behave but unfortunately he often does not.

Just as the old brain overlies and does not replace the new, so too the functions of the old brain are but held in check and are not replaced by the functions of the new. Consequently, the identity between feeling and action, between impulse and behavior, between desire and fulfillment still potentially is present in us all. It awaits only the release of the brakes by the new brain to spring full blown into outward expression.

We quickly can demonstrate how readily these brakes may be lessened. Human behavior when the stress is too great to withstand (as seen in severe war neuroses) is almost identical with human behavior when the brakes have been released



FIGURE 3. Reproduced by permission of *Collier's* and the artist, Virgil Partch.



artificially with drugs. Blacking out, uncoordinated movements, irrational fears, extreme restlessness, hysteria, and violent emotions all occur when the brakes rather totally are removed. The behavior of people whose old brains are dominant is similar whether the loss of new brain control is caused by overwhelming threat or by drugs. Consider human behavior at a cocktail party. At the beginning, you may recall, behavior is social in nature. The group is polite, relatively reserved, considerate of each other and, in short, is "you-oriented." After about the third drink, however, some changes occur. No longer are the members so reserved nor may they be entirely polite. In both language and behavior, social convention becomes increasingly unimportant. One of the group may tell a story that, four or six ounces of whiskey ago, he never would have considered. Furthermore, the tale may be greeted with gales of laughter. Thereby a sequence of stories of increasing filth may begin and will be enjoyed by everyone except, perhaps, a lone individual who still holds his first drink in his hand. He observes readily that the group has become less inhibited, less socially conscious, less concerned with "what others may think." This situation beautifully has been characterized by Virgil Partch whose cartoon is reproduced.

Despite the dictates of so-called "common sense," alcohol depresses rather than stimulates. The apparent stimulating effect is obtained because alcohol drugs the brain. It starts at the highest levels and progresses downwards and it induces behavior characteristic of old brain function. We believe that our most recently learned behaviors are controlled by the highest levels of the brain (new brain). Each brain level holds in check the levels beneath as the foreman may govern the behavior of the supervisor who in turn controls the output of the worker. Therefore, if a higher level is not operating, a lower level can function unchecked and uncontrolled. Since alcohol drugs the highest levels first, we must expect that our most recently acquired behaviors would be affected first. This is indeed the case probably because alcohol reduces the ability of the brain to utilize oxygen and the demand for oxygen is greatest in the higher levels. Consequently, the first behavior

patterns to be lost as intoxication progresses are what we call the social inhibitions. These are those awarenesses of the rights of others that, both historically and individually, have been man's most recent acquisition. As time and alcohol wear on, we behave more and more as though our individual and personal desires were the sole factors in our actions. As higher levels become progressively narcotized, lower levels are permitted to function without the usual controls and our old brain becomes quite dominant in our behavior.

When, therefore, our new brain becomes relatively ineffective, the only rule we go by is what we *want to do at the moment*. As the hungry wildcat feeds with thought only for a full stomach, so also the intoxicated human behaves only in terms of the wish of the moment. Nothing else matters, only what *he wants now* is important. The brakes are off, the old brain and all of its selfishness is ascendant and desire, raw and unadorned, reigns supreme. What should be or what tomorrow may bring are at best vague and but half-realized things. Foresight, sense of responsibility, consideration for the rights and opinions of others, thought, or a period of delay between desire and action, new brain functions all, are gone. There remains only the need of the moment as a guide for behavior. This is why the drunk is so unpredictable; why the hop-head behaves so bizarrely.<sup>2</sup>

### EGO-NEEDS

You may observe in this illustration something of the thinness of the veneer that the socializing process places over us. You can see that the socialized ways of doing things but overlie and do not replace the primitive, ego-dominated behavior of early man. The animal lurks within us all awaiting only the unguarded moment for its release. Ego-needs, completely self-centered desires, are very close to the surface of behavior and they lie in wait for the instant that will free them and plunge us back into the "I-ness" of wish and want.

<sup>2</sup> See W. Rambo, The big lie about moderate drinking, *Pageant*, February, 1956, pp. 148-161.

Our struggle with ourselves can now be seen to center about the problem of maintaining new brain control, to maintain the supremacy of thinking, with its consequent "you-oriented" behavior over feeling and its "I-orientation." This is the task that society has set for its institutions of training—the home, the school, and the church. It is a task principally of applying appropriate brakes to the essential wishfulness of man; a task that to date has been rather inadequately fulfilled.

Let us see what this task involves. In so far as we can determine, man is born as an essentially emotionless animal. At birth, the infant can express only a kind of generalized excitement that we may suspect as rather undifferentiated old brain activity. As time goes on, the emotions as such appear until at about two years of age, the range of adult emotional display is present, at least in rudimentary form. It is interesting to observe that as the emotions differentiate out of the primitive excitement, the negative feelings of anger and fear appear before the more positive ones of elation and affection. It would seem that man's emotional development recreates his own evolutionary growth in that the earliest emotional behavior characterizes the solitary animal with the expression of more social feeling appearing later. In a sense, man "by nature" is designed to live alone in an environment in which he may fulfill need as it arises. It looks very much as though man must *learn* to live with his fellow man—and indeed he must!

The emotional beginnings that we have spoken about seem to arise out of natural development processes. That is, the material from which emotional expression may be made already is present when the infant becomes subject to the influence of his particular worldly surroundings. However, how and when feeling may be expressed and under what conditions seems to be the outgrowth of learning. *What* irritates, *what* is feared, *what* is to be loved, emerges only as life experience enlarges and the infant learns how to express feeling in behavior as a response to certain particular situations. It follows therefore that the conditions under which emotions will be expressed by the adult result from his life experiences. They are learned and hence open to direction and control. Logically,

this is quite correct. However, the rules of logic and the rules under which man most usually learns are two very different things.

### NEGATIVE TEACHINGS

Unfortunately, the most common form of emotional learning occurs under the rule of "things that are not to be done" often enough without attendant explanation of reasons "why." We are taught *not* to show fear or anger instead of being shown how not to be afraid or not to become angry. Emphasis seems to be placed upon just not doing things rather than an understanding of how feelings arise and of the role that attitude may play in them. This is done despite the fact that it long has been known that suppression alone is not effective in the control of human behavior. (Need we go farther back than the Volstead Act?)

Furthermore, we know that emotion most likely will be aroused by situations in which the person feels inadequate. As example, we get mad at situations in which we feel incompetent, foolish, frustrated; situations much better coped with than cursed at. We also know that in such situations where the human feels a high sense of personal inadequacy, *tension* develops. In a sense most real, this is similar to the pressures developed within a boiler as fuel increasingly is fed with the outlet for the steam becoming increasingly smaller. Sooner or later, something gives.

In the human, the tension that he feels is disturbing in itself. Further, he becomes yet more susceptible to emotional irritants and a circular process is begun. In this, the person attempts to suppress the emotion, this develops tension, the tension itself makes him more susceptible to the irritating situation, which increases the emotion and around we go. If a person's life is filled with situations in which, for a variety of reasons, he feels inadequate, he will sometime come to a sort of saturation point beyond which sheer control no longer is possible. At this point, the accumulated tension breaks out in the form of "nervous symptoms." When the stress is high enough,

we rupture just as does the boiler when the steam cannot longer be retained. These symptoms arising out of emotional tension could have been avoided as could the boiler explosion by the application of proper safety valves. With the human, these safety devices emerge out of intelligent training. Evidence for this is found in the fact that when tension has driven a person to ask for help, the internal disturbance tends to be reduced as the person develops understanding of how he got that way. Here we speak of "insight" or self-understanding. Many times when we humans come to understand what really is going on inside of us, a lot of our inner tenseness diminishes. Furthermore, we know that the specific fears a person may possess have been learned and that they often are but reflections of the fears of his parents.

Let us look at the specific fears carried about by young adults in our country. We can see that these fears spring from ineffective preparation for life. They all can be classified under basically unnecessary concerns. They were obtained from a group of run-of-the-campus college students.

FEARS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

<i>Situation Feared</i>	<i>Number of Times Mentioned by All Subjects</i>
Insecurity	64
Illness	47
Failure	46
Disapproval by others	42
Loss of friends and relatives by death	32
Unhappy marriage	31
Frustration (being unable to do as desired)	30
Unhappiness	20
Poverty	18
Death	15

Analysis of these fears is interesting. Consider the most certain of them—the fear of death. Now death cannot be prevented and it is the inevitable result of living itself. Nevertheless, an attitude of fear toward it is hardly a rational thing. In our life, what is inevitable *must* be adjusted to if we are to live a reasonably happy existence. Of course, the fear of death boils

down to ego-centeredness and may be expressed by such words as: "I won't be here any more" or "I won't have them any more." Maybe this fear does arise out of the child's concern when separated from the mother during early life but it remains still an expression of egocentric wishfulness. It is, as most of our fears, intimately connected with *our own welfare* and has little to do with other people. Here again we see the domination of "I-oriented," old brain functions over "you-oriented," new brain activity as expressed in behavior.

### **POSITIVE LEARNING**

Much of this concern may be dealt with by a clear realization that where you cannot change events, you must change yourself. It commonly is said: "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em!" Wishing that things were different and complaining about unfairness in such situations is but expressing a desire to evade an issue. The acceptance of the inevitable puts us in a position to adjust to it.

There are some ways to do this. You should know that in general, death comes to us quietly and peacefully. Fear and agony are the exception rather than the rule. Most of us really just go to sleep. In addition, you may determine to express your potential to its maximum so that the life you can *know* is met squarely, effectively, and meaning is given to your existence. If you really know yourself, you are in position to make the most adequate use of your abilities and hence to feel secure in the knowledge that what you have done has been your best. In essence, the specific problem here is an aspect of the general one that faces us all—that of looking for the positive things in life instead of worrying about the negative ones. With regard to the fear of death, the greater change must take place in your attitude toward it.

Things are somewhat different where the fear of illness is concerned. In this case, you can take definite steps to reduce it. Regular physical examinations and the applications of well-known principles of careful living clearly are indicated. By

maintaining good health through intelligent living, you may keep your body more resistant to disease. Regular medical checkups remove the possibility that illness may become chronic before it is discovered. These same principles apply to so-called "diseases of the mind." Many of you fail to take such steps because you are so fearful of "what the examination may show." This is intensely interesting. Does it not mean that you, a layman, have already made the diagnosis and essentially are afraid that the physician will but confirm it? Silly, isn't it? Regarded coldly, it is sheer infantilism and the best of evidence for the statement: "Fancy is more to be feared than fact."

Even though the worst should materialize, knowledge about the skill that modern medicine possesses in dealing with disease, especially when diagnosis is made early, tends to decrease fear and therefore the extent to which you may be haunted by it. Keep in mind that you are most afraid of what you do not understand and that knowledge itself is an effective anxiety-reducer.

### **SELF-KNOWLEDGE**

This last statement can be applied to all the rest of the fears listed. If feelings of insecurity torment you, take stock of yourself and learn of the principles of good adjustment. Remember always, that security is not something you *have*, it is something you *are*. It cannot be purchased, it must be grown in the heart. The secure person is one who feels reasonably adequate to deal with the things and events in life. This feeling of competence grows out of knowledge; knowledge of yourself and of others. If you know yourself, if you have had a competent inventory taken of your assets and your liabilities, if you know what you can and cannot be expected to do, you should be reasonably able to cope with most of the life situations you may be called upon to face. If you try to solve things by hoping for a life in which you can be equally adequate in *all* situations, you are wishing for the moon and deluding yourself.

Similarly, if you fear failure, take stock of yourself. Learn of

your liabilities as well as your assets. Compare these with the demands of the life task you wish to pursue and prepare for it accordingly. If you discover that the life goal you wish to achieve makes demands that you will have undue difficulty in meeting, then look over the alternates and select another where your chances of success are greater. Keep in mind that when the thing you feel you really want to do appears beyond your grasp and you begin to consider alternative solutions, your old brain will dictate a stringent: "But, I want." Keep in mind also that if you are to use the knowledge available to you, you must follow the new brain's more considered: "But, I should." If you wish, you can avail yourself of modern information, you can obtain facts that bear upon the probability of your success in your chosen life's work. You can do this before it becomes necessary for you to "find out the hard way." You will recognize that the earlier in life this information is made available, the greater will be the opportunity to apply it effectively. Ordinarily, this information is not discovered until adulthood is reached—the result of ignorance that can be traced directly to the rationality myth. This, we shall investigate later.

The fear of social disapproval or of an unhappy marriage fall into the same slot. If you are concerned about your social acceptance, look about yourself to see what it is that people like in others and then search your mind to see how well you conform. Once you have done this, you can change your behavior so that you now say and do the things that attract other people. In this search, you will find that really desirable personal characteristics are new brain functions. You will see these characteristics revolve about a "you-outlook" rather than the more primitive (but much more popular) "I-ness" of the old brain.

If fear for unhappiness in marriage haunts you, look into the many studies of the stuff from which successful marriages are made. Then apply this information to yourself. Once more you will find that the emphasis is upon "you" rather than "I" along with other factors that we shall examine in detail somewhat later in this book.



## FEARS

So commonly, an examination of such fears under the cold light of objectivity places them in class with the old Cornish Litany that goes: "From ghoulies and ghosties, long-leggety beasties and things that go 'bump' in the night, Oh Lord, deliver us." Fears like these can be markedly reduced and even removed by the willingness to face them squarely and to examine them in the light of knowledge. As so often is the case, wishing and hoping have little effect; only *action* pays.

You will notice that the fears most of us seem to carry about arise largely from ignorance and often are emotional hangovers from childhood. The fear of frustration is particularly interesting. The college students who mentioned this fear usually followed it with an explanatory: "Not being able to do what I want to!" Could we ask for a more direct expression of childish (old brain) demands? Other infantile fears occasionally expressed by the students were: darkness, loneliness, snakes, futility, rodents, authority, sex, telephones, old age, and going to hell after death.

Now remember that the subjects in this study all were college students attending a liberal arts college where applicants are selected rather carefully. Consequently, these students are representative of our "best brains." Furthermore, other studies have shown that these data are the usual rather than the exception. Beyond this, the concerns expressed by 1000 everyday kind of folk centered around being self-conscious, the opinion of others, lack of self-confidence, and the fear of criticism. As you know, all of these are correctable once they have become established and can be prevented from developing at all. If groundless fear haunts the lives even of our most intelligent individuals, how much more may be the reasonless worries of the great mass of our population? You also can see that intelligence by itself alone is no guarantor whatsoever of rational living. Only when we make deliberate application of our new brain potential to the problems of life may we expect to be relieved from the shackles of fear.

How emotional living hampers us in our daily lives is indi-

cated by the expert estimate that some 16,000,000 men and women in the United States need psychological help. Furthermore, only about one seventh of them are getting it. You may recall that nearly 20 percent of all draftees in World War II showed evidences of psychological disturbance. Capping the climax is the fact that it is an excellent statistical bet that one out of every ten youngsters alive right now will have need for psychological care sometime during his life. Are you getting an idea of the seriousness of the problem? Of course, the tragedy is that most of this could be prevented were we humans willing to do more and to wish less.

### **ACCEPTANCE OF SELF**

In such prevention, a realistic understanding of man and his fundamental nature is of the utmost importance. Some of this understanding begins when we replace hopeful belief with realistic knowledge; when we refuse to accept man as basically rational and regard him as he is—an emotion-driven creature. We *must* recognize that man is, and always has been, principally an emotional animal. Once we accept this fact, we can educate him in terms of it and cease to insist wishfully upon his “inherent rationality.”

The assumption that man, merely by being told what he should do, inevitably will do it has been proved false by human experience over thousands of years. If we are to find more effective ways of living, we must accept man for what he biologically must be: a wanting, wishful, willful creature. Once we so accept him, we can begin to train for mutual understanding instead of setting up futile barriers of “thou must” and “thou must not.”

Over the centuries of our socialized living, we have tried to train man in his adjustment to others by telling him what he must and what he must not do. Usually, this is done without attendant explanation and becomes simply rules that *must* be followed. It should not surprise you, therefore, that frustration and its accompanying internal rebellion are an integral part of our social development. Training us to “accept” frus-

tration as such hardly seems to be the solution. It is doubtful that problems can be solved by pyramiding them. Learning how to "suppress" frustration would but add to the load.

Let us recognize quickly that neither frustration nor suppression are "bad" in themselves. Rather, it is the frame of belief in which they occur that makes difficulty practically certain. You see, so long as we erect false self-images (ego-ideals) for us to meet, just so long will our emotional reactions to them make good adjustment hazardous.

Let us look at the situation. Consider the ego-ideals that most adults carry about. As we grow up within our society, we are taught in all of our institutions of training (home, school, church) that man fundamentally is a reasoning being, that he thinks out and plans his behavior, that he naturally is interested in and sympathetic toward his fellow man, that the *good* life is one of self-sacrifice and humility. Along with this, the child is told that this is the way man *is* instead of being taught that these are the ways society would like man to *be*. Sooner or later, the growing person discovers that, by and large, people are primarily interested in themselves and that they just do not *behave* as he has been led to expect. He also comes to recognize that he himself does not *feel* as he has been told a human being should. What has happened is this: his self-image or ego-ideal is rational, reasonable, humble, and kind while his inner self or ego is a feeling, willful, I-oriented thing. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that puzzlement and conflict develop within him.

Now again, it is not the conflict itself that is harmful but the attendant feelings of guilt and wrongdoing that are incompatible with healthy adjustment. It rather looks that we deliberately prepare children for future breakdown. Would it not be simpler to accept man *as he is* instead of continuously trying to force him, squirming and resistant, into unreality.

We can so accept him. We need only to accept ourselves and to recognize that our essential "I-ness" is fundamental to the animal called man. We must accept as fact that because we want, we desire, we envy, we feel uncertain, we are anxious, and afraid, we are not different, not unique, not peculiar, nor

somehow afflicted, but that we are as are all humans—striving, feeling, wishful things. All we need to do is to meet this reality *at its own level* to reduce the psychological horrors created by the rationality myth. We must recognize that this involves no degradation of man, no return to “animal nature” (as though we ever had gotten away), but only the acceptance of the fact that man basically is a creature of his wishes. When we recognize this, we bring into closer alignment the too widely separated ego and ego-ideal of man and we see ourselves as we actually are rather than the way ancient speculators in human nature decided that we should be. A potent source of conflict, thereby, can be removed and we have a better chance of beginning our earthly existence without the haunting specter of neurosis. Of course there always will be friction between what man wants and what he can get, but he at least would no longer be tormented by feelings of guilt because his inner drives were out of line with what he believed *ought* to be.

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### 3. EMOTIONAL LIVING

Present fears are less than  
horrible imaginings.

—Shakespeare, *Macbeth*

LET US LOOK AT THE EMOTIONAL AREAS THAT CAUSE us difficulty. We can find two distinct classes:

1. *Fear*—avoiding, evading, retreating from, behavior either actual or symbolic.
2. *Anger*—attacking, approaching, advancing toward, behavior either actual or symbolic.

In addition to these two comprehensive areas, we can find an overlapping feeling, *anxiety*, that may appear in either fearful or angry behavior. The particular way in which a person may show anxious behavior seems to be determined by his typical reaction to situations of stress. If he meets threat by trying to run away from it (either actually or symbolically), anxiety will be aroused because he feels inadequate to deal with the problem. If he meets threat by attacking it (either actually or symbolically), he becomes anxious because of the retribution that may follow. In either case, anxiety may appear because he may feel that he has not acted in a “manly” or socially approved fashion. That is, he may feel that he has not behaved as he has been taught a human being *should* behave.

We might point out right here that while “actual” behavior readily may be understood—all of us know what actually running away means—“symbolic” behavior may puzzle us. Let me illustrate. Symbolic running away occurs when we avoid an issue by a statement like: “I wouldn’t dirty my hands with it!” or “I’m much too busy to compete,” and similar an-

## 28 *Problems of Human Adjustment*

nouncements. Symbolic attack occurs when we say: "The man is mad!" or "I don't know what she sees in him," and like statements. Symbolic behavior may also occur in the shrug, the gesture, the facial grimace. In fact, the lifted eyebrow may express a world of symbolism. In all cases, the person indicates his basic feeling by some word or movement that portrays without really involving.

### **LEARNED FEARS**

Present evidence permits us to say rather flatly that the specific fears we humans carry about with us are *learned*. You will recall that at birth the human infant shows no specific emotions and that it is not until the child is about two years old that he shows emotional behavior typical of the adult. Even if we were to accept the belief that emotional states in their original forms are given or inherited, there is all kinds of evidence to show that the fears of the adult have been learned—usually during his very early life. Furthermore, we know that in general we tend to fear things that *might* happen rather than those things that are much more probable to occur. We thus discover that we fear unrealistically; that we torment ourselves needlessly with awful fantasy. Certain it is that fancy is more to be feared than fact. We seem to fear most of all those things whose likelihood of occurrence largely is determined by our own behavior. This is out of agreement with the belief that man is a rational creature but it fits nicely with the concept of man as emotional in nature.

These unrealistic fears of ours, when traced back to their childhood origins, commonly are found to have arisen through ignorance. Children are told of: "Ghoulies and ghosties, long-leggedy beasties and things that go 'bump' in the night . . ." in an infinite variety of forms. These may range, in any one of our lives, from the statement that feeble-mindedness is caused by parental intoxication at the time of conception to the horrifying but equally fallacious comment that "masturbation causes insanity." The abyss of ignorance from which such beliefs flow can be easily discovered provided only that you



FIGURE 4. "Little Maisy's our problem child." (Reprinted from *The Female Approach* by Ronald Searle, by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. Copyright, 1954, by Ronald Searle.)

can read. However, it is much easier to accept than it is to check and consequently such concepts readily become a part of our social structure. Other sources for unrealistic fear in us adults are the use of darkness (locking in closets, and such) as punishment for childhood infractions of adult rule, threats of "bogey men," and other nocturnal horrors of make-believe. (The cartoonist Searl has caricatured this practice.) Later when the child begins to read so-called "children's stories" that deal in the fantasy of ghosts, ghouls, witches, ogres, evil spirits, and other legends, the ground can be fully prepared for nighttime as a period when the devil himself roams free. Small wonder that "fear of the dark" ranks so high on the list of children's fears. Furthermore, our list of things feared by college students shows that this fear often is not put away with other childish things as adult status is reached. Our emotional habits are so integral and fundamental with us that they die hard—if ever.

A great deal of such irrational emotional development grows out of man's tendency (along with all other animals) to follow the line of least resistance open to him. As all advertisers, educators, and propagandists know, it is much easier to sell an idea through emotional appeal than it is by appealing to man's intelligence. To make people "want," it is helpful if they can be prevented from *thinking*. As you would expect, it therefore is easier to make a child mind through fear than through reason. Admittedly, it is difficult to reason with children although this hardly is an acceptable excuse for the failure to try. It is also true that much of this difficulty lies in the adult who expects the child to look at things and to think about them precisely as he, the adult, does. It is interesting that this same adult might show infinite patience in the training of his bird dog. He realizes that his dog will learn only through the continuous repetition of the skill to be learned. He does not expect the dog to reason things out for himself nor that it will grasp "adult" concepts immediately. He may, however, complacently expect similar impossibilities of his child on the ground that a dog is just an animal, not a human being.

Such a person simply does not know. He readily will admit



that: "No dog can be expected to show much stability until it has outgrown its puppyhood," while at the same time blithely expecting his four-year-old offspring to make a clear-cut distinction between right and wrong.

Unfortunately, we know that where its electrical activity is concerned, the new brain does not develop adult patterns until the child is between eight and ten years old. It also has been shown that even in the late teens, intelligent youngsters ordinarily cannot make a clear distinction between legally punishable and legally nonpunishable behavior. When we are aware of the evidence for the length of time adult intellectual development consumes, we should no longer be surprised at the ease with which emotionalized belief can be established in the young. When the young person is forced by adult pressures to deal with situations and concepts he cannot really comprehend, his only choice is to follow whatever feeling tone is generated and hence develop his individual way of responding to future pressure situations.

### **THE FOLLY IN PUNISHMENT**

Now if this behavior is out of line with adult expectation, punishment of one form or another usually follows. This, of course, is to show him the folly of his ways. This is only common sense. Yet, what if punishment serves only to reinforce this undesirable behavior? It may, you know. Attempts to force organisms to meet problems with which they are not capable of coping, merely guarantees some form of undesirable behavior. An illustration: If an animal, from rat to man, is faced with a basically unsolvable problem and forced to attempt to solve it, some form of undesirable or maladaptive behavior appears. If punishment follows this undesirable behavior, the maladaptive behavior pattern itself becomes *fixed*. This means only that when the creature encounters another similar situation, the previously punished behavior reappears. Thus, punishment under these conditions but guarantees that the punished behavior itself is being *learned*. Now you know why the comment: "I punish him and punish him

### 32 *Problems of Human Adjustment*

but he keeps right on doing it," so often is the bewildered cry of a frustrated parent! Punishment can be effective *only* when it is applied immediately after the act and when the punished organism understands fully why the punishment *must* follow the act. Even under these conditions, the fact that so many criminals repeat and repeat an originally punished offense raises considerable doubt.

Other ways in which we can get off to a wrong start in life can be determined by behavior that "pays off" in the home. When a child finds out that he avoids difficulty or, conversely, obtain approval through humility and supplication, he readily can form the habit of blaming himself whenever his behavior brings him into conflict with parental desire. Now humility is a fine thing but, like any other attribute, it becomes vicious as soon as it becomes *the* way a person reacts to life situations. It is inevitable that we humans will encounter situations and events that occur through no possible fault of ours. If we then feel guilty and blameworthy about them, we but build internal tensions that find no reason in reality. Yet, when this is our way of reacting to foul-ups in life, the habit maintains itself quite regardless of what the objective facts may be. We may recognize, logically, that we are in no way to blame yet guilty we feel nevertheless and, hating ourselves, seething with internal revolt, we follow our behavioral destiny and feel somehow weak and ineffective. This can but make for ineffective living. When we react like this, we fail in our efforts. We fail because essentially we are afraid of parental disapproval although by now this early, specific fear has spread out to cover all forms of authority. In a real way, we have been trained to meet life's problems by nonstrategic, nonadjustive retreat; a road that leads only into self-insufficiency.

An applicant for a job as Plant Superintendent had made his way up to the point at which he was to be interviewed by the company psychologist. The candidate was a cheerful and friendly person who cooperated fully during the psychological interview. In fact, he cooperated too well! It quickly became apparent that he was too much concerned with finding out the precise expectations before he would make even minor decisions. A sizable proportion of interviewing time

was spent in reassuring him that he was meeting demands as was desired. He was afraid to move out on his own or to move unless he was quite certain that it met with approval. Despite fundamental ability and sound experience the man was not recommended. Modern industry places a premium on the willingness to make a decision and to accept responsibility for it. The chance that this applicant could develop such willingness was simply too great to take.

### **FEAR OF LIFE**

Training in being afraid of life may express itself in another guise. When a youngster is unable to understand what the parents are asking of him and, having already suffered from abortive attempts to comply, he may develop an attitude of "wait and see." Generally speaking, hesitation prior to action is desirable because it permits a person to examine an act in the light of future consequences. However, when the hesitation arises out of fear and is coupled with a desire to make a "perfect" response, then the delay leads only to a kind of psychological immobility. If we feel that we must wait until we are certain that our behavior will be perfect in all respects, then our chances for genuine accomplishment decrease with some rapidity. We then wait, postpone, and procrastinate until the job is done by someone else, meanwhile wondering why our efforts were not appreciated. After all, we only wanted to be sure that what we did was right!

A young engineer with a creative and ingenious intellect seems to be doomed to junior positions throughout his industrial career. When he is assigned a problem, he is inexhaustible in ferreting out pertinent detail and comprehensive in bringing them to bear upon the issue. He does a tremendous job of analysis. He worries the facts until they all are aligned with the major task. Long past the time when he has ample information to decide upon a course of action and to advance a recommendation, he continues to polish and hone. Ultimately, his superior has to demand that the data be given him so that a decision may be made and action taken. This infuriates the young engineer and he fulminates about "half baked" ideas and programs. While he is a valuable employee because of the comprehensiveness of his analyses, he is not considered as promotable ma-

### 34 *Problems of Human Adjustment*

terial. He will not draw a "sufficient" conclusion from "insufficient" evidence.

Fear of life can lead us into fantasy. In our dreams, day and night alike, we can be the "somebody" we admire rather than the "anybody" we are. We can shift people and events according to our whims, and since we are absolute authority personified, our decisions always are correct. So long as our daily life makes no special demands upon us, we can live in our two worlds simultaneously, although not very effectively in the world of reality. If, however, we should be faced with the inescapable necessity of facing life frontally, our chances for survival are small. Our mental hospitals are crowded with those of us who have attempted to meet life's realities with an individual dream world of our own. For illustration of this manner of avoiding responsibility, need we go farther than Walter Mitty?

#### **ANGER**

Other behavior that can develop from early training in emotionalized living can be illustrated by the child who finds out that his parents think he is "cute" when he openly and loudly rebels against them. Soon he discovers that these rebellions can be used to get what he wants. Shortly, the parents are faced with yelling, screaming attack whenever the youngster's wishes are blocked. It becomes easier to give in than continuously to combat and the child grows up believing in the "open sesame" of violent displays of temper. Ultimately, since the home is not the only area of activity for the child, this behavior pattern will run afoul of authority. When the tantrum then fails, he will feel unjustly discriminated against and may become yet more violent. Or, he may retreat into a world of fantasy where he can punish his enemies in such devious ways as his imagination may conjure up. The personal satisfactions these daydreams may bring him may make him a sulky, sullen adult who meets life reasonably well so long as it is yielding. When things go wrong for him, he will pull into himself and

pout. His life is composed of futile, emotional introspection and filled with resentment and hate.

There is a man, high up, in a well-known and successful organization. How he got there is a long story of devious and admittedly skillful practices. He tolerates no opposition and is highly ingenious in working out ways to circumvent it. If he spent the energy he does in getting his own way in more positive activities, he would be a thing to behold. He can cut an associate's throat so cleverly that it may be years before his associate knows what happened to him. Needless to say, his area of responsibility is characterized by uncertainty and filled with "yes men." What may happen when he reaches retirement or when his high blood pressure ruptures a cerebral artery can give one the shudders. Attempts to get him to see what he is doing to his people and to himself get short shrift indeed. This man is a classic example of a fine brain misdirected and proselyted by emotional living.

Anger, as a typical way of meeting life's frustrations, can take another form of expression. When a situation is encountered that temper fails to remove, confusion and uncertainty can develop. When we use anger to solve problems and it doesn't work, we sometimes look for a solution in an attitude expressed by: "Everyone is out for what he can get, and I'm going to get mine!" (The finest current example of this attitude is found in the life of the late Serge Rubenstein.) We then become a ruthless, ego-centered person whose only standard of conduct is self-gain. If, in time of loneliness, our unconcern for others rises to haunt us, it but increases our certainty of the fundamental rightness of our conviction. So long as we gain our ends, things certainly will go well with us so far as *we* are concerned. It is equally certain that we will never be able to survive genuine defeat unscathed. Any time we put all of our behavioral eggs in one attitudinal basket, we are assured of but one opportunity of dropping it. The tremendous difficulty in reassembling Humpty Dumpty can be found in both rhyme and reason.

Oftentimes, however, the completely ruthless person returns in some measure what he has seized. In his dotage, he will often attempt recompense through large donations to chari-

table institutions and through the building of centers of learning and research.<sup>1</sup>

Behavior based on fear or anger as typical ways of meeting life's demands may develop out of parent-child relations other than those having to do with discipline as such. When goals are held up that are beyond the ability of the child to attain, attitudes of defeat and anxiety can emerge. A parent who does this commonly is motivated by an effort to relive his own life in the life of his child. The parent may have been thwarted in his own ambitions to become, say, a physician but he is going to see to it that his son is a doctor, come what may. He completely ignores the hard fact that an attitude of: "My child will get (or be) the things that I never had (or could be)," can be effective *only* if the child is sufficiently competent. An attitude of this kind clearly indicates how the wish may become father to the thought. Once the parent has decided upon the course of life action his child shall pursue, he brooks no interference. If the youngster fails, parental blame and censure is immediate. So commonly, parental bewilderment and anger is expressed by: "I've given him everything, but he just doesn't seem to appreciate it!"

### **DANGERS OF UNREALITY**

The basic problem here is a common one. It principally is a case of a decision being made before all of the facts are in. There unfortunately is much truth in the punch line: "Don't confuse me with the facts, I've made up my mind!"

Instead of finding out what the child's abilities may be (and clinics where such information can be had are universally available) and accepting them as they may exist, the parent blindly decides upon the child's future with complacent disregard for reality. He, of course, is following the well-exploded myth that: "All men are born free and *equal*." Free we may be at birth, *equal* we are not. Intellectual ability alone can serve as an example. It is well and commonly known that such

<sup>1</sup> S. Holbrook, *The Age of the Moguls*, Garden City, New York, Doubleday, 1954.

ability ranges from idiocy to genius throughout our population. It is known, but seldom accepted—particularly when it happens to *you*.

In the atmosphere of the home where the life career of a child already has been decided, the child himself comes to regard his future with the same ignorant smugness that characterizes his parents. Reassured by the fallacious but appealing dictate: "You can if you will," the youngster can but feel guilty should failure be his lot. When this happens, the parental recriminations concerning "sacrifices" made for him and dearly held hopes for his future but add to his sense of inadequacy. Foredoomed to failure through no fault of his own, he comes to regard himself as weak and unable. Even though he may survive the blow, he can but look upon life through lenses colored by his own bitter sense of futility.

The son of a successful physician came to college certain of his professional destiny. He would be a doctor, like his father. As long as he could remember, this had been his life plan. While his high school career had not been distinguished, nevertheless he had done better than average work. In college he followed his anticipated destiny unswervingly, although with some increased difficulty as courses became more advanced and competition more keen. He graduated with an average record. He entered medical school the following fall. He tried, he fought, he failed. A year later he re-entered only to fail once more. He now is working in his father's laboratory as a technician convinced that he has somehow been unfairly dealt with. His intelligence is really below average for the general college population. Knowledge of this fact prior to the vocational decision would have indicated a somewhat less intellectually demanding occupation. Had this been done, he might now be a happy medical technician rather than a frustrated and embittered man.

Another extreme of parental behavior also is represented in the lives of our psychological misfits. These parents, having read an early book (vintage 1920) on "Child Psychology," discovered that only by letting a child grow up in terms of its own desires could they hope to rear happy offspring. Consequently, from infancy on, the child was treated as a kind of un-



"It's *priceless*. Normie's building a rocket to shoot Pamela to the moon."

FIGURE 5 Reproduced by permission. Copr. 1951 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

wanted relative and tended much as was the furnace—only when attention obviously was necessary. Cuddling was looked upon as coddling and mother love was as antiquated as the whalebone corset. The application of this "Topsy Psychology" continued as the child matured and he was permitted to "express himself" as he best saw fit. For a period, "progressive"



parents succeeded in rearing as fine a batch of human monkeys as the world had ever seen. Charles Addams gives us the picture.

Fortunately, this movement was not especially widespread. Since most adults are not avid book readers in technical areas, the overall damage was slight. But it takes no stretch of the imagination to realize the problems a youngster reared under such conditions would face on the playground or in the school. His rather completely self-centered behavior would make conflict inevitable; a conflict he would find quite incomprehensible since his only standard for behavior was what he *wanted* to do. We also know that "mothering" in infancy makes for increased security feelings later in life. Since the child also lacked this bolstering effect, the way would be clear for difficulty in meeting the problems that face us all.

We have talked a great deal about the effect that early experience can have upon later behavior. Ordinarily, most people seem to feel that children may be "too young" to be much influenced by what goes on about them. Let *us* take the stand that: "No child is too young to be affected by what happens around him!" Now, let us set out to prove this statement.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES**

Recent evidence shows that the very young infant may be quite susceptible to environmental influences. We have reason to believe that the stimulation given the infant by "mothering" is essential for the efficient development of both physiological and psychological health. The infant has need to be held, rocked, and cuddled if his bodily development most effectively is to take place. If the infant does not get this kind of mothering attention, he develops a sense of anxious insecurity that may haunt him for the rest of his life. Furthermore, clinical experience shows that early and severe illness of any kind is so much of a threat to the body that the experience carries over into later life in the form of feelings of insecurity and inadequacy. With regard to a feeling of adequacy and se-

curity in later life, the attitude of the child's parents appears to be most important.

Who else but a psychologist would think of using his own son to do an experiment on this question? One such prominent professional man did just this. Beginning when his son was fifteen months old, he read, in the original Greek, three selections from one of Sophocles' plays. He read these selected passages aloud to the boy each day for a period of three months. Then for another three months, three more selections were read daily and this process repeated until the child was three years old. In all, twenty-one varied selections were read aloud. The psychologist then dropped the experiment until the boy was eight and one-half years old. That is, for a period of five and one-half years nothing was said or done about the Greek play. However, at eight and one-half, the youngster was required to memorize seven of the original twenty-one selections (one selection each from the various three-month reading periods). To this task was added three new selections (ones that the child never had "heard") that also had to be memorized. This procedure was repeated when the boy was fourteen and again when he was eighteen; each time he learned seven old selections and three new ones. Thus it was possible to measure the effect the original reading had upon the boy by comparing the ease with which he learned the old material contrasted with the difficulty of learning the new. At eight and one-half years, the youngster learned the old material 30 percent more easily than he grasped the new. At fourteen, the old material was learned 8 percent more readily but by eighteen years of age, the effects of the early experience no longer were perceptible. However, if you will stop a moment to think, you quickly will recognize that these results literally are amazing. What could be more meaningless to a child in his first three years than the sounds of ancient Greek? Yet, measurable effects of this "meaningless" experience clearly were seen up to eleven and twelve years later. Actually, we find rather dramatic evidence for the effects very early experience may have upon later life.

Now add to this, if you will, the intensifying pressures of experience that may have vital meaning to the life economy

of the individual (such as parental rejection of overindulgence) and you can begin to understand the importance *to the adult* of the things that happen to him as a child. You may recall the horrifying illustration in Morton Thompson's *Not as a Stranger*, where the child, after having been so threatened for "playing with himself," found a razor blade and amputated his own penis! Evidence and anecdote such as these should give us reason to question the soundness of adult attitudes commonly expressed by: "Oh, never mind, she's too young to understand!" and "Aw, what difference does it make to a kid?" It *may* make a very real difference; possibly *all* the difference between effective and ineffective adjustment later in life.

Such relationships are common from man to rat. White laboratory rats, who lived on a near-starvation diet very early in their lives, failed to show normal sex behavior as adult animals and also did not learn new experiences nearly as well as did those whose early life was more secure where food was concerned. It also has been shown that when food is hard to get early in a rat's life that later such animals will hoard food way beyond the normal hoarding behavior. Furthermore, rats that had to pay a price to get food early in life (that is, to take mild electric shock in order to eat) were found to be much more willing as adults to cope with electric shock in a learning situation. Their earlier experience enabled them to make a more superior adaptation to electric shock than was true of animals that had not undergone the original shock experience.

Similar results can be shown for all the forms of animal life psychologists and physiologists have worked with. Whether it be rats, cats, dogs, monkeys, apes, or men, the evidence is common to all and very clear. What happens to organisms early in their lives can and does have enduring effects upon their later behavior.

### **SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The effects of such early experience is not limited to the purely individual behaviors we have described to date. There

are social implications as well. Chickens, raised in isolation from the time of hatching, show "neurotic" behavior when later they are placed in the company of others of their age who were reared under more usual conditions. When the isolated chicks finally were brought into the community run, they were tremendously upset. They appeared frightened and confused, they made wild and erratic efforts to escape, and in general were quite antisocial. It looked very much as though they were panicked by strangers. We can find similar illustrations and similar behavior in the human realm. From time to time, there will appear in newspapers and scientific journals reports of children who have been kept isolated in cellars and garrets. When first these unfortunates are introduced to the external world of reality, they too show the same confusion and bewilderment that characterized the chicks.

Such evidence demonstrates the necessity of early and continuous contacts with reality if the organism is to meet it at all adequately. The facing of new and hence perplexing situations relatively late in life is a very, very difficult adjustment to make. The question would seem to be not who or what you are, but where you have been and what you have experienced.

A child, about five years of age, was discovered tied to a piece of furniture in a second-story storage room. Apparently, she had been there for the greater part of her life. She was taken to a county home where she was given proper medical and psychological care. In spite of all of this, however, one year later she was still unable to talk and had developed no dependable toilet habits. She could take a few steps and would obey simple commands.<sup>2</sup>

More pertinent is the report of the Reverend Singh on the two "wolf children," Amala and Kamala. We are told that these two children were found in the lair of a wolf. Whether or not this be true, it is certain that their behavior was more animal-like than human. It was estimated that Amala was about six and Kamala eight. Both children were taken into a native mission home and attempts were made to teach them to behave like human beings. Seven years later, Kamala had a vocabulary of forty-five words and showed intelli-

<sup>2</sup> R. Davis, Extreme social isolation of a child, *Amer. J. Sociol.*, 1940, 45: 554-565.

gence at about the three-year-old level. (Amala died about a year after her "capture."<sup>3</sup>)

(There have been enough of these cases of social isolation to indicate that the extreme slowness in learning is not a function of original mental deficiency. The evidence is that the inability to learn had been caused by the social isolation itself.)

It would look as though there is plenty of support for the statement that the behavior of the adult largely is determined by what happens to him as a child. It would appear, therefore, that the great need is not so much in attempts to improve the human *race* as it is in improvements in the *adjustments* we make to our environment.

It should also appear (by now!) that much of this improvement in adjustment can be obtained through an intelligent understanding of man *as he is*, coupled with a willingness to forego wishfulness about man *as he ought to be*. For much too long have we insisted that the wish be the reality. Consequently, we have been suckers for all the propagandists who have held up for our admiration the concept of man as an entirely rational animal, that may through sheer willed choice determine his destiny. Unfortunately, many of those who so describe man are authorities in areas other than that of human behavior. However, because we humans assume that because a man is an expert in one field, he therefore can speak authoritatively in all others, we listen to opinion and accept it as fact.

### **OUR EMOTIONAL SELVES**

Now it may well be true that, were we intellectually to weigh each decision before we make it, we *could* govern our behavior primarily by our new brain. Unfortunately for this theory, we just don't do it! By and large, we do as we *feel* rather than as we know or think. Even intellectual decisions may be cued by what we want or believe—we simply cannot escape our emotional selves. If this be true, and indeed it is, then is it not much better to learn how to live with ourselves

<sup>3</sup> Reported in A. Gessel, *Wolf Child and Human Child*, New York, Harper, 1941.

instead of trying to deny a basic part of our nature? Since we are most comfortable with things we know and understand, suppose we look a little farther into ways in which feeling may control behavior.

We already have seen how fear and anger early in life may determine a person's later responses to situations he meets. We also saw that such responses were maintained because they helped the person to get what he wanted—or thought he wanted; it's much the same thing.

In general, however, emotional behavior arises out of thwarting or frustration. A common reaction to such frustration is *anxiety* (the fear-in-general mentioned before). The things feared by our college students illustrate this frustration-anxiety relationship. Remember that "insecurity" was highest on the list. This would indicate that a blocking of desire had been experienced in the past and was a source of fear for the future. We can therefore consider anxiety as worry about or fear of some anticipated event which the person is quite uncertain of how to meet. This factor of feeling inadequate to deal with future occurrences is basic to anxiety. With this in mind, let us consider anxiety itself and the part it can play in our behavior.

### **ANXIETY**

Anxiety always arises out of a feeling of threat; a feeling that something is going to happen that we cannot handle. The high incidence of fear of failure, disapproval, death, and loss among our college students supports this statement. However these fears may arise is beside the point for the moment. The fact is that anxiety, or feelings of potential inadequacy, is common to us all. Anxiousness, in one guise or another, rides hard upon us each and everyone, so, since we have it, let's try to understand it. We take it as a mandate that even in the case of things we cannot possibly prevent, there is yet much we can do to prepare ourselves and that this preparation must come from within us. Said another way, if we cannot change life, we can (and for happiness we often must) change our attitudes to-

ward it. This is as difficult a task as ever we may face; nobody will deny this, but, if reasonable happiness is our goal, we have no choice but to try.

Let's face it. We will never totally remove anxiety from our lives. In fact, it is not desirable that we should. In measure, anxiety serves a purpose; a purpose that may be vital to us. Considered this way, anxiety becomes a warning of future danger and hence prepares us to meet it. We refer here, of course, to *real* danger and not the fancied kind. Actually, anxiety is only dangerous (and this usually is the case) when it gets out of control, refers to a situation of which we are afraid but are also unwilling to do anything about, and has so permeated our lives that it becomes a veritable block to action. A guiding rule for this would be: "Anxiety is out of control when the feeling of threat is out of realistic proportion to the actual event." We would say, therefore, that a person who worries about his effectiveness in social relations and yet who appears to us to be likable and friendly is experiencing anxiety out of proportion to the situation. Recognize in such a case that the feeling of inadequacy serves principally to make the person less socially effective. Here you can see the basic circularity of emotional living. The more uncertain he feels, the less effective he becomes, and this increases his feeling of inadequacy, as was stated earlier. It goes around indeed and it is most difficult to tell where it may stop. Dean Inge tells us: "Worry is interest paid on an obligation before it is due."

We can speak of adjustive and nonadjustive anxiety. The socially concerned person previously described showed the nonadjustive type. Anxiety as a preparation for danger gets us ready to *act* and hence is adjustive in nature. If we then do something that prepares us to cope with the situation or serves to reduce the danger, we are behaving adjustively. We behave nonadjustively when the feeling of danger serves only to set us into a spree of worrying or retreat. When this happens, we solve nothing and we begin the circular process already described. Unfortunately, it is this latter type that we humans most often experience. We tend to identify anxiety with helplessness and therefore to do everything except face up to the

dreaded event. We exhaust our energy in various forms of running away and are much too fatigued actively to do much of anything when the event does arrive. When this happens we are but victims of our own fancy, running from hobgoblins of our own making and escaping only into a world of wasted effort. Small wonder that we who live emotionally chronically are all tired out!

The energy we expend in trying to avoid things we really should face is exceeded only by the ingenuity of our attempts. We show an almost unbelievable skill in self-deception. We would be a long way ahead if we had as many techniques for meeting life as we have for evading it. Where adjustment to life and to each other is concerned, we now could be living a thousand years in the future. Let's have a look at some of the evasive tactics we humans have devised.

### **REPRESSION**

We may try to "forget" the dreaded event, saying with Scarlett O'Hara: "I won't think about this today; I'll think about it tomorrow." In this technique of self-deception, we attempt to keep the feared thought deeply buried within ourselves. This is a most difficult thing to do. Feeling and emotion have force all of their own and they "rebel" against being shunted away. So, unless our guard be vigilant indeed, they sneak through and before we realize it, the haunting fear appears in consciousness and we have to push it away all over again. All this takes energy in an increasing amount and the time comes when our energy reserves approach exhaustion. This point often is signaled by the fear cropping up in dreams when our waking control is absent. Thus, for the price of peace during the day, we pay with nights of terrifying dreams. We are worn, tired, exhausted, and we are losing the battle before it actually has begun.

A young lady complained about night terror and the huge, black creatures that threatened her in her dreams. In talking about herself, she revealed that she had been reared in a home where the word "sex" was not only taboo but considered nasty, vile and animal-like.



She herself was quite concerned about the whole sex question. Somehow she felt that humans should be above such things and that nature had played a dirty trick on man. She was quite certain that she never would feel any desire for so awful an act and believed that her friends who showed an interest in sex somehow were not quite nice. After some hours of discussion, she began to accept the fact that sex behavior was as natural as any other bodily function, was a part of growing up, and a rather normal thing in general. While she probably never will be able to accept sex as completely natural to humans, she at least is no longer frightened by "huge, black creatures" in her dreams.

### **IDENTIFICATION**

We may try to remove fear by associating ourselves, either actually or imaginally, with important, successful people. The assumption seems to be that if we can surround ourselves with prestige and power we are safe. Obviously, some of the importance should rub off and therefore we cannot be threatened or harmed so long as we have our powerful friends. Instead of facing the situation and doing something about it ourselves, we hide behind those who have demonstrated the courage we lack. Also, we may hope that if we observe closely and imitate accurately enough the successful ones, that we somehow will find sanctuary. When we are unable to face life frontally, we often attempt to fulfill ourselves by the association with and emulation of those whom we feel have achieved that for which we are searching.

A college freshman arrived on campus all set to succeed through the adoption of the mannerisms of his current movie favorite. With considerable skill he utilized each gesture, each intonation, each expression, including a fancy manipulation of eyebrows that characterized his idol. He was better in the part than the actor himself. Unfortunately, instead of impressing, he bored. His associates, both student and faculty, found him artificial and shallow. Luckily for him, he was both intelligent and smart enough to figure out the score and by his senior year was much more himself and much less of the screen great. Furthermore, he was liked and respected for his own dramatic ability.

## 48 *Problems of Human Adjustment*

The error in the identification technique is in the assumption that just as primitive man ate the heart of the lion to partake of the lion's courage, so the imitator feels that by behaving like his model, he too becomes like him and attains his status. Obviously, "prestige" advertising plays on this human tendency. If you wish to be like Mrs. Van Gelt, then you must drink this whiskey, use that soap, or drive a certain car!

This identification may occur also in daydreams. When we find our real life threatening, we may seek refuge in the more protected and private world of fantasy. In this realm of illusion, we may become whatever we desire. Since many have become famous only after their death, may not we also be now unrecognized? But after we are gone, then how we shall be missed! Or, we may actively think of ourselves as a great personage alive or dead and warm ourselves in the glow of satisfaction our imaginary achievements make possible. We can thus convince ourselves that we really are a somebody whose fate it is to remain unheralded because of circumstances quite beyond our control.

This particular path to "security" is lined with booby traps. It is inevitable that times will occur when our dream must give way to reality, and then where are we? What may happen when we must come face to face with a real problem that we must resolve? Right here we fall flat on our face; fancy fails us and we are ill-equipped and unarmored.

A college freshman was referred to the Department of Psychology by one of the college Deans because of failing work. Test scores placed him well within the "superior" category of intelligence but the interview disclosed that commonly his "studying" involved gazing at the open pages while fancying himself to be a great engineer who had built the world's largest dam, the highest bridge, or like enterprises. Often as not, his class periods were spent in similar activity. He had no close friends and tended to remain by himself. Earlier, his parents had taken him to a psychiatrist who, after examination, told the lad to "get out and be with people." Because of his preoccupation with himself as "the world's greatest engineer," it was quite impossible for him to follow this advice. In fact, it was impossible to get him even to consider trading his own world for the

one of reality. Since the college was more impressed by his academic record than by his imaginary achievements, he was dismissed from school, to, one suspects, an ultimate breakdown.

### **RATIONALIZATION**

We can fool ourselves in other ways. We may try to solve our problems through continuous self-justification. The camouflage here is nearly perfect. It has been said that we humans have two reasons for everything we do: "The reason we give, and the real one." All of us know how very easy it is to wriggle out of responsibility by giving most plausible excuses while deep, down within us, we know that what we say just isn't so. But, it sounds good and generally we get away with it. We always are able to point out circumstances that prevented us from doing anything other than what we did. If our inner structure is too weak to permit us to face error or duty, we always can discover a reason why it all really wasn't our fault: "Because, you see, there just wasn't anything else I could do—it was just one of those things."

A college instructor couldn't seem to understand why people avoided him. Actually, he had a positive genius for social insult. If an associate made an error in his presence, he would smirk and correct his associate quite pointedly. When asked why he insisted upon irritating others in this way, he would express amazement that intelligent people should object to such correction. His reasons always were plausible and disarming. It was evident that his "real" reason—his basic insecurity—was hidden from himself.

A forty-two-year-old accountant applied for a job. During the employment interview he displayed a job history that was as varied as were his reasons for it. He had held no position longer than two years and in all had some twelve different jobs with as many different companies. At the time of the interview he also was in process of changing religions and his reasoning behind this move was a masterpiece of psychological barratry. He had a lot of fundamental ability and would rank within the upper 5 percent of college graduates in intelligence. Had he spent a fraction of the energy on any one of the jobs he had held that he wasted in efforts to justify his behavior, he

well could have been in line for executive position in Finance. One can depend upon it that he already has worked out a most satisfactory story accounting for the fact that he failed to get *this* job.

### PROJECTION

A more active and aggressive form of self-delusion can be found in the rather easily developed habit of ascribing our own faults to others. With this technique, we see all about us the behaviors we fear in ourselves. We are most suspicious of the other fellow's motives and we see hypocrisy everywhere. Therefore we, the pure in spirit, feel need to protect ourselves from the crudities and indecencies of life. Fortunately, the fact that the evil we see but reflects hidden desires within us largely



FIGURE 6. Reprinted from *The Cartoons of Cobean*, selected and arranged by Saul Steinberg, Harper & Brothers, 1952. Copyright, 1952, by Anne M. Cobean.

lurks beneath the level of awareness. In a peculiar sort of way, we are looking *through* the mirror and do not recognize the reflection cast as our own. We consequently can live with ourselves readily by projecting our own fears and wishes out upon the other people.

An instructor, wishing to demonstrate a personality testing technique to a group of summer-school students, brought a crystal ball to class, and after describing how different people saw varied things in the globe, asked for a volunteer. One of the older feminine members of the group came forward and peered earnestly into the crystal. Suddenly, she straightened, and with flushed face stalked back to her seat saying indignantly over her shoulder: "How dare you sir, how dare you show such horribly indecent things to me!" While one cannot be certain, and this lady would not discuss her experience, the suspicion is strong that she "saw" within the ball the fulfillment of some of her inner wishes, probably of sexual nature.

### **VACILLATION**

Some of us try to solve our problems by a complete avoidance of decision. These of us are the: "What do you think I should do?" characters. Whatever the question may be, whether it regards the choice of a tie in a shop or centers around a change in job, we may try to get the other fellow to decide for us. This is a neat gambit. All personal responsibility is ducked and if the outcome is bad, it is the other person's fault, whereas if the outcome is good, well, we are a pretty clever fellow. This is most distinctly an "all to gain and nothing to lose" technique. How many times have you encountered it? You have found it in such statements as "Well, it wasn't what I wanted to do but so-and-so thought I should." This, of course, when the decision turned out to be a poor one. When the dice fell right, it then becomes: "A lot of my friends thought this wasn't such a good deal, but I stayed with it." How can you lose?

These "second guessing" techniques crop up in an infinite variety of forms. These appear in the business executive who regularly opposes any change in policy that may be brought up in management meeting. Equally as regularly he is "sold" on the change desired by his group. *But*, if later events prove

the decision unsound, he can be depended upon to point out that, if the group recalls, he was against it in the first place. Of course, if things turn out well, he maintains a discreet silence.

The consulting psychologist in industry must always face this problem. Time and time again when essentially management decisions are involved, he will encounter: "What do you think I should do, Doc?" The dilemma is clear. If "Doc" gives an opinion, he may be a dead pigeon; if he does not, he gets: "Look, I thought you were supposed to help me with these things!" The actual facts are, of course, that the executive should not expect a psychologist to be a business counselor and the psychologist should have communicated clearly that his business is people, not product. Management decisions must be made by management while the psychologist serves only as an advisor when strictly "people problems" come up.

We find vacillation in much clearer form in less sophisticated areas. Consider the following illustration:

A college student was referred to a guidance official because of poor grades. The student was specializing in science courses and not doing well at all. An analysis of his aptitudes and abilities showed that the probabilities were that he would be happier and more successful in the social studies area. The choice that thus arose gave the lad almost infinite grief. He wrote to his father asking advice. However, for once, his father told him to make up his own mind. The two weeks prior to final registration were turmoil indeed. The boy constantly was in and out of the counselor's office using device after device to get the counselor to tell him what to do. The advisor, however, insisted that the student must come to the decision himself. Finally, the boy came up with a proposed schedule in which science and social studies were quite haphazardly scrambled. Since these courses were his decisions, he was permitted to enroll for them. After discovering that while he was doing rather well in the social studies but again failing in science, the student said: "Well, maybe I had better change my field, hadn't I?"

### **NARCISSISM**

Another way we avoid real responsibility is through convincing ourselves that final answers are to be found only

within our own judgment. We build up a self-determined importance and ability so great that no ordinary mortal really could understand us. This is a much more aggressive kind of avoidance than vacillation, yet it stems from exactly the same source—namely, basic uncertainty of our worth. When we hide behind self-ascribed grandeur, we can avoid real commitment because our ideas on the topic would be so far beyond general comprehension that it is better to say nothing at all. Consequently, we use hint and suggestion to indicate our superiority without actually coming to grips with anything. Production in any real sense is impossible. If we do anything, it must be a contribution way beyond the usual because if it is not, our self-built edifice of importance tumbles and we stand revealed as just an ordinary person after all. So, we talk, we criticize, and we hint, but we never, never really *do* a thing.

A professor in one of our large universities keeps the students (particularly those of the female sex) in his classes in a state of continuous amazement at the breadth and extent of his knowledge. No technical view or experiment ever is quite adequately stated or done; no discovery made that he has not already anticipated; in fact, there is nothing in the entire field but what would be markedly improved if he but had time to put his hand to it. If, by chance, some incautious student should raise a question which in any way casts doubt upon the professor's observations, the man has a stock of "squelchers" ready at hand. Some of these are: "I'm surprised that a man of your intelligence would ask a question like that!" or "No one who pretends to an ounce of information in this area would dream of asking such a question!" or "If you'll just roll up your sleeves and go to work in the laboratory, you'll discover the answer to that for yourself!"

### **FLIGHT INTO FANTASY**

You will recall that when discussing identification, fantasy was one way of deluding ourselves. Daydreaming, or fantasy, may be an end to itself. In this world all our own, we may find a solace and comfort denied us in the world of reality. The professor in the preceding section was daydreaming out loud. In this private world, all problems are solved just by wishing

them out of the way. Since in daydreams we manipulate all the strings, we cannot lose and victory always is ours. However, such excursions into the world of: "Wouldn't it be nice if . . ." make each return to things as they are more difficult and increase the appeal of fantasy itself. Dream though we may, the problems of reality await our return quite unchanged despite our flight into fancy. What is worse, time and energy that might much better have been directly applied have been lost and never can be regained.

Not too long ago, an otherwise quite intelligent man, quite old enough to have known better, drove at appreciable speed into the rear of a large truck. His explanations to the police were most ingenious but to a close friend he told the truth. He is an avid reader of science fiction and was driving along dreaming of having met a "Venusian" who gave him an instrument that would transmute metals at his will. He was busily engaged in developing new, high-temperature alloys for use in the combustion chamber of jet and rocket engines when the crash "awakened" him. This boy literally was "out of this world!"

Another example can be seen in the spontaneous writing of a very insecure but highly talented young lady:

My enemies are my enemies, but are my friends my friends? Happiness is self-deception, is intimacy also an illusion? Friendship is not a comfortable sensation but a burden so heavy that my back is bent with the weight of their troubles. I could create a world of my own. Would I be happy to enter it, not reluctant to open my eyes as I was when I knew that I had been born and must live in someone else's dirty world all full of smoke and hate? If I had not been born, I would not have to die. We are compelled to abandon one after the other the stupid illusions that are thrust upon us when we are too weak to defend ourselves. The world is full of hateful things; big, black, ugly people. I hate them all. . . . If there were another flood, I would be the only one to live. I would claim the highest peak for my own, secure at last. I would look through the clouds and watch their senseless, wild antics as they tried to hold onto the mountain side and I would release large boulders and slide them down the mountain.



## **REGRESSION**

We can try to reduce our anxiety by returning to behavior patterns whose real usefulness has been outlived. When we are thwarted, we may resort to sullenness, shouting, anger, or tempestuous tears. When such behavior makes up our customary way of responding to frustration, we can be sure that within ourselves there resides a weak and insecure person. Although we have grown in years, we have remained an emotional infant. Often this results from the fact that when we were an infant, our "will" was stronger than our parent's "won't." Consequently, we try to face the world of reality with the emotionalized reactions of a young child. When, therefore, we encounter problems that make us feel inadequate (and most of life's problems will), our only recourse is in emotional upheaval that continues until someone repairs whatever "little toy wagon" has just been broken.

A college senior, majoring in psychology, was the terror of her suite. Whenever her slightest wish was blocked, she would break into a fury, throwing whatever she could seize at the heads of her unfortunate suite mates. These latter tried all manner of ways of appeasement and threat to no avail. Finally one of them, at the height of a storm, clouted her a dandy. It was a full arm swing and undoubtedly stung because it had months of frustration behind it. The angry one was totally bewildered and the silence that followed was awesome. However, for the remainder of the association there were no more temper tantrums, at least while the suite mate with the punch was in the room.

Behavior of this kind is in no wise limited to the female sex nor yet to the very young adult.

There is a Vice-President to whom subordinates refer—but distinctly in private—as the "rhinoceros." He is a one-man band whose decisions are ultimate, final, and not to be questioned. When he encounters opposition, however mild, his lips begin to pale, his mouth to work, and shortly there is the devil to pay. Old hands, aware of these signs, beat a strategic retreat whenever they appear. The in-

cautious, the naïve, and the fool stay with it only to spend some later days in regret. Consequently, the executive now is surrounded by men of two types: The "Yes" man and the master politician. Needless to say, tremendous energy is spent in maneuver and placation; energy that much more constructively could be expended on company problems did not survival depend upon it being otherwise utilized.

There are other approaches to reality that we humans use. These are more aggressive in form but nevertheless are indicative of an anxious and insecure inner man. But at least, when we use these, we do something in a direct way. Instead of retreating in some manner, we advance, although often with a sheer, bull-like rush. Even so, we are still attempting to escape from ourselves. Our executive described just above falls into this group in a way. He, through literal overriding of all opposition, was attempting to *prove to himself* that he was the solid individual he knew in his heart he was not. Let us now consider the more frontal ways of evading the issue.

### **FLIGHT INTO REALITY**

We may actively move toward reality, taking refuge in the hustle and bustle of daily affairs so that we literally have no time to think about ourselves. When we do this, we ask for more and more things to do, we look for responsibility in ever increasing doses, we take bulging brief cases home at night and generally keep ourselves so preoccupied that there is small chance for our inner anxiety to creep into awareness. We are highly efficient, we are charter members in the Coronary Club, but much of our output loses genuine meaning because it is achieved almost entirely out of an internal, compulsive fear. We never take vacations, we never play. Our perforated ulcer, our precoronary life, is spent under the motto: "Drive, drive, drive—lest we have time to think!" Our life is spent in a rush to achieve in business or social areas (seldom in both), and since we cannot really relax, only death awaits retirement *or* we are retired only by death.

A middle-aged executive seems driven by an unremitting conscience. He arrives at the plant early in the morning, he stays late at night, and he uses his lunch hour for conferences he has not been able to work in during the morning. Each night he carries a loaded brief case home with him and works in his study until the small hours. Periodically, he runs down and spends a week or so in bed recuperating but, even here, has an assistant bring him office material as soon as he is able to sit up once more. Beyond highly intellectualized reading, he has no hobby. He is intense, highly strung, and nervous. Any criticism of his area becomes a personal reflection upon his ability. He is all things to himself, and his assistants are relegated to "go and get" boys. He does little delegating and no training at all. He was passed up at the last promotion because top management found him neither resilient nor flexible enough. He got where he is through the very habit patterns he now shows. These habits served him well when he had responsibilities he could meet alone. Now, however, that his duties are much larger than any one man can encompass, he fights his losing battle amidst a growing (and quite justified) concern for his success. If he finally realizes, before bodily catastrophe strikes, that none of us can be completely sufficient unto himself, he may be helped. Until such time, assistance is impossible—he simply will not understand.

### **PERFECTIONISM**

We may attempt to deal with anxiety through a search for the perfect response. We then spend our lives always on the verge of achievement but never quite attaining it. Our every effort always needs just one more little touch before it is complete. These little touches, becoming more and more minute, lead us into a deep morass of indecision. Our life is typified by a puttering with things just about done. We spend it working yet never achieving. However well done the task actually may be, we plead for just a little more time to check and measure. We do not realize that nothing is final, nothing absolutely completed, and that we humans can do our best, but no more. Unfortunately, for the perfectionist, the "best" is found not within himself but within external measures of accuracy and completeness.



**I will review my thoughts just once more.**

FIGURE 7. From *The Lonely Ones* by William Steig, by permission of Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc. Copyright, 1942, by William Steig.

We need no other illustration for this way of meeting life than the implications within the accompanying Steig cartoon.

### **SUBSTITUTION**

The last technique in this section is a common one. In it, we attempt to substitute success in one area for feelings of inadequacy in another. If we are foiled, say, in our desire to become a surgeon, we may, given the skill, become an illustrator for anatomical texts. In this manner, we can compensate for failure in one area through success in another. Many of us, tormented by inner doubt, attempt to find relief in the problems of others by entering occupations such as clinical psychology, social work, or the ministry. Illustrations of this technique are numerous but all of them follow the pattern of "second choice." The pitfall is that whatever measure of success the second choice may bring, we cannot escape the con-

cern that we might have made it in the original field had we tried a little harder or had the breaks been more advantageous. The trouble is that substitutions only approximate the real thing and often are quite unnecessary when proper guidance is applied early and honestly.

A coed, desirous above all else of "making" a sorority but because of unfortunate personal characteristics having never been invited, invested her energy in academic and dramatic activities. She was elected to the highest scholastic honor society in her junior year in college, was a member of numerous honorary groups, and was a leader in dramatic productions. She accumulated "honors" upon end, graduating cum laude in psychology, but will forever carry with her a sense of failure because none of her golden trinkets were jewel-encrusted Greek letters.

A professional man, in his late forties, is embittered and unhappy. "All his life," he wanted to be a medical man and now realizes that only fear and stubbornness prevented this achievement. Although he is nationally known in his present field, has attained material success much beyond usual expectations, such largely is gall in his mouth. In many, many ways, his substitution has worked out unusually happily but he cannot so accept it. His new brain tells him one thing, but deeply embedded within the old is the complaint: "But I wanted to be a Doctor!"

It is a certainty most clear that you, as you read these pages, have found yourself not once, but to a degree, many times. This, you should expect. None of these mechanisms are "bad" in themselves and all normal folk indulge in them to one extent or another. Just keep in mind that no habit is so terribly bad so long as you have control of it. Remember also that any habit becomes vicious the instant it begins to control *you*. All of us daydream occasionally, we try to "forget," we alibi ourselves, and may feel that we too have much in common with the great man. We may also "work off" disappointments through vigorous exercise or hard labor, and undoubtedly there are times when our temper gets the best of us. Further, who among us has not felt that his production lacked just that final touch that would have made him truly effective? Who of us has not discovered that the suspicion he saw in the eyes of

an acquaintance turned out to have arisen within his own mind? And many of us, when our golf game fails, plunge headlong into bridge.

These devices are common to all of us and all of us use them upon occasion. We need but remember that so long as we have a variety of responses for life situations and that we do not try to solve all of our problems by one procedure, so long are we reasonably safe. Whenever we stake our all upon one line of defense, it is inevitable that sometime the ramparts will be breached and we then are caught defenseless. Basically, we are the most flexible of organisms and have an almost infinite variety of behavior patterns at our disposal. However, when we attempt to escape from ourselves, we also often fall prey to standardized, stereotyped responses that create more problems than they solve. Our principal task therefore, as we face life, is to maintain the plasticity of behavior that is our birthright and to beware of the beguiling techniques of "easy adjustment."

To maintain this natural plasticity, we need to keep eternal vigilance on ourselves, to keep our new brain at the controls, and always to ask ourselves whether we really *think* this to be true or merely *feel* that it is so. If we are to do this, we must take stock. We must inventory ourselves and make active use of such procedures as modern psychology and psychiatry have devised. Answers to questions that haunt us can be found and we can find relief for our mental turmoils as we find relief from physical distress. Two things are important:

1. We must sell ourselves that we are experiencing nothing that countless others have not also gone through.
2. We must *do* something about it. We must ask for help; help that is waiting only upon our request.

Let us try to do away with the bugaboos of myth and superstition that have surrounded things psychological ever since medieval philosophers verbally stripped man's mind from his body. We must not permit the speculations dreamed up by ancient thinkers from the depths of their easy chairs to color and control our lives today. We live in an age best char-

acterized by the term "supersonic." Is it not basically stupid for us to permit our thinking to be governed by a time span described by the term "superstition?" Let us have a look-in-depth at what modern students have to tell us about a man's mind-body.

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## 4. MIND-BODY

**The ruling passion, be it  
what it will  
The ruling passion conquers  
reason still.  
—Pope, *Essay on Man***

**I**N POINT OF FACT, WE HAVE KNOWN FOR A LONG time that what we call “mind” really is a bodily function and an inseparable part of it. Many years ago, around 385 B.C., the Greek philosopher Plato complained about the current “medical error” that referred to mind and body as separate things. The thinking, therefore, that considers mind and body as distinct from each other has all the tradition of ancient history indeed. We have evidence to indicate that the past and present belief that the mind is something beyond and apart from the body stems from early attempts to describe human behavior in the absence of factual information. When we humans can but guess, any hypothesis that makes apparent sense becomes acceptable as truth.

The separation of mind and body was forced upon the medieval theologians who, having identified “mind” and “soul,” had no choice but to make a specific distinction between mind and body. This was true because since the body was corruptible while the soul endured, the two obviously must be separate and distinct.

Our discussion here will be limited to a discussion of “mindedness” as it may be observed in the laboratory and the clinic. In these two areas (as in general life behavior as well), behavior that we call “minded” can be observed and measured. Whatever is implied by the term “soul” is quite beyond our province and to date has defied all efforts to measure it.



Consequently, we shall have nothing more to say about it.<sup>1</sup>

The error in separating mind and body was continued by later philosophers. These speculators in human conduct, observing the movements of their own bodies and sensing the correspondence between an actual movement and a feeling of preparedness to make the movement, felt that somehow two separate activities had to be involved. They could, you see, *observe* the actual movement but they could not so readily observe the establishment of the feeling of getting ready to move. They were sure that there was something that started the movement and, since we humans are compulsive about naming things (on the assumption that when we name we also understand), they called this something "mind."

### **MIND**

That is, the early student of human behavior could analyze only in terms of his sense organs. Consequently, in describing the activity involved in the movements implied by: "I shall reach out and pick up this book," these observers could both see and feel the arm's motion but could not find, within the range of activity observable to them, how the "I shall" part of the behavior came to be. It therefore seemed most necessary to them that there should be something, above and beyond the body, that gave action and direction to it. This unobservable and unknown "something" they called "mind."

Now we recognize that such speculators in human behavior did the best they could with the actual information available to them and that they were in error through no real fault of their own. However, it speaks only for our own gullibility that we should still carry about in our thinking, beliefs that long ago should have been discarded. Mind and body were separated only through philosophical verbalisms whose reality is of the same nature as elves and goblins. The so-called "mind-body problem" arose largely out of man's interest in

<sup>1</sup> The interested and open-minded reader may find discussion of this concept and a description of some of the confusion thereby induced in K. Dunlap, *Religion: Its Functions in Human Life*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1946.

## 64 *Problems of Human Adjustment*

playing with words. The concept was built at the verbal level of behavior, has been maintained at this level, and has as much *reality* as have the words used in describing it. Biologically, no such distinction can be made, and since realistic thinking has no place for sheer word magic, we may leave the "problem" as disposed of by denying its existence.

Solving problems by denying their existence, however, is an unsatisfactory procedure. The reason for its unsatisfactoriness is that you well may wonder just where the "word magic" begins and ends. Dogmatic dismissals of issues always must face this question. So, let's face it.

If mind is not a sort of ethereal mannikin functioning somewhere in the head, just where may "it" be? Let us see exactly what we can make of the concept of "mind." When we try this, we discover quickly that we are talking about an *activity*; about what organisms *do* with things. We discover that "mindedness" is a way of *responding* to the things and events about us.

If we were to ask our fellow man what "mind" is, we would get an answer to the effect that mind is "what a person thinks with" or "what a person knows" or "that which distinguishes man from animal." Boiled down, these concepts involve an identification of mind with the brain as common sense tells us. Now we shall see that, by and large, "common sense" is an unreliable guide to the understanding of human nature. In this case, "common sense" tells us "what everybody knows," namely that "mind" and the function of the brain essentially are the same thing. This belief nicely was illustrated by the student who, after a class demonstration of the gross structure of the human brain, commented that his brother (a physician) "had a human mind on his desk." This erroneous but popular belief also has tended to maintain the tradition that mind and body somehow are distinct.

This is not to say that, in any real sense, minded behavior can occur in the absence of a relatively intact brain. It has been shown, over and over, that if the function of the frontal lobes (that part of the brain directly behind the forehead) is impaired, rather definite and consistent changes take place in

behavior. In such cases, whether the patients are rats, apes, or men, there commonly is loss in the ability to profit from past experience, or loss in what we call "foresight" and "judgment." In the human particularly, the behavioral changes that occur subsequent to impairment of frontal lobe function are just those anticipated by the new-brain and the old-brain relationship described earlier. Persons who have undergone such impairment show a definite loss in planning ability and in deliberative behavior. When a person loses his ability to foresee the consequences of present action, he behaves in the impulsive, ego-dominated way we have seen to be typical of old-brain control.<sup>2</sup>

Furthermore, minded behavior may not take place in the absence of a heart, or a liver, or a pair of lungs, nor yet, as we shall see, in the "absence" of the bodily muscles. In fact, identifying mind with *any* bodily organ does gross injustice to the organism as a whole and keeps our thinking submerged in error. The brain and the nervous system are not the mind any more than the battery and the ignition system are the horsepower of an automobile engine. Neither can be demonstrated in the absence of the other; it is only when these parts are working in harmony with all the rest of the "machine" that mindedness or horsepower appears. Thus, the brain and the rest of the nervous system, although not mind, are essential to minded behavior much as a battery and an ignition system are essential to the development of horsepower in an automobile engine.

But the mindedness of organisms is not to be likened to horsepower in engines in any realistic sense. Differences are obvious. Characteristics of mindedness involve such behaviors as thinking, purposing, deciding. No engine can do this. What then makes it possible for man to think, to purpose, to decide? We would agree, one suspects, that in order to do these things, man has to have something to "think" about, something to "purpose" toward, and some things to "decide" between. That is to say, man must have tools to work with; he

<sup>2</sup> A general and highly readable discussion of the brain and its functions can be found in J. Pfeiffer, *The Human Brain*, New York, Harper, 1955.

must have materials available to use in his thinking, purposing, and deciding. These tools and materials are constituted by what we call information or knowledge and this knowledge arises out of man's sensitivity to the world about him. It is through the ease with which his sensory systems are responsive to the things and events with which he comes into contact that "knowledge" is obtained. Since these things and events about him are seldom experienced in isolation, knowledge develops in a framework of "meaning."

Thus, because large objects and sensations of heaviness have appeared together in our past experience, large objects "look" heavy. Likewise, a "two by four" may be "seen" as a lever, a section of studding for a partition, or as a piece of firewood depending upon what our past experience has been and upon the needs of the moment. Mindedness thus comes to arise out of knowledge and meaning and, since these grow out of sensory experience, mind becomes a function of the entire body and as such is inextricably bound up with all bodily processes. In this manner the sense organs and the muscles of our body instead of being the servants of our brain, as we have supposed, are seen to determine its function, at least in part. Actually, it has been shown that when the bodily muscles are completely relaxed, intellectual activity (imagining) is impossible. That is, in the absence of bodily functions, "mind" cannot exist, i.e., mind, rather than an expression of the function of any particular organ, is essentially an organization of all bodily processes.

In addition to this, it may be indicated that when an individual's private life is viewed from an internal frame of reference, it is called subjective or mental. If the same processes are viewed from an external frame of reference, they are termed objective or material. So considered, the mental and the physical become relative terms which express a relationship between an observer and an observed. Thus, so-called differences between the mental and the physical become pseudodifferences since in each instance, but one organism is being observed. Such "differences," therefore, as may emerge, reside in the modes of observation rather than in observable

differences as such. "Mind" and "Body" exist only as constructs erected by an observer.

### **UNITY OF MIND AND BODY**

The concept of mind and body as separate entities can now be seen in its real light, i.e., as another hang-over from ancient belief that has no place in the thinking of modern man. Lest this, however, seem too summary a dismissal of so venerable a point of view, let us sample the evidence upon which the concept of the essential unity of the mind and body is based. Evidence bearing on the essential oneness of the human organism would fill volumes. Over the past twenty years a book that but reviews the clinical and experimental literature in this area has gone through four editions. Beginning in 1935 with about 400 pages, the 1954 edition covers well over a thousand.<sup>3</sup> Since about 1945, books bearing on the mind-body unity (Psychosomatics) have appeared regularly and continue to arrive. In 1939, the journal, *Psychosomatic Medicine*, was founded for the purpose of giving the growing number of workers in this field a common outlet for their studies. While evidence is more than ample, it is still too soon for the basic concept involved to obtain general (popular) acceptance. We must face the fact of the "cultural lag." This means that generally it takes some fifty years for a new concept to be taken for granted by the mass public. With so much material at our disposal, about all we can do is to sample about. We shall try to so select our evidence that we do not unduly test belief nor yet get into unduly complex or bewildering concepts.

Through simple and fascinating experiment, you can demonstrate something of this relationship for yourself. Ask four or five people to sit in straight-backed chairs, to close their eyes, and to put their hands upon their knees. When they have assumed this position, ask them vigorously to imagine that a steel rod is extended down through the center of their right arm from the shoulder joint clear out to the tip of the middle finger. Make this request over and over. After

<sup>3</sup> F. Dunbar, *Emotions and Bodily Changes*, New York, Col. Univ. Press, 1954.

## 68 *Problems of Human Adjustment*

several times, walk past the seated group, alternately lifting their left and right arms. You will discover that while the left arm usually is limp and relaxed, the right arm will tend to be stiff and rigid.<sup>4</sup>

Now all you asked your friends to do was to *imagine* that a steel rod was extending throughout the length of their right arms. You said nothing (I hope!) about contracting the muscles or making the arm stiff. You but asked them to think about a rather impossible situation. Do you not find observable evidence in this experiment for the interdependence of the "mind" and the "body?" If both were not but different aspects of the same thing, would these results be likely? If you can believe your senses, and in general you can, you now know that at least mental and physical functions are very closely associated. However, let us look at some further illustrations of the mind-body principle that have been obtained under more controlled conditions.

### **HYPNOSIS**

In the phenomena of hypnosis we find prolific sources of material for our purpose. Under hypnotic conditions, the relationships between what goes on in your head and what happens to your body can be controlled and measured.

Before we get into this in detail, let us say at once that hypnosis involves no mystic power whatsoever. All that exists between hypnotist and subject is trust, confidence, and cooperation. The subject is willing to accept what the hypnotist says to him and is able to imagine that what he is told is fact and he therefore accepts it as such. Hypnosis is but an extension of the conditions described in the experiment above where the imagining of a steel rod running lengthwise through the arm led to muscular contraction. No dominance of "wills" is called upon. In fact, a phonograph record of the suggestions to be given can serve the function of the hypnotizing agent as effectively and as well as can a "hypnotist" himself. With

<sup>4</sup> M. Arnold, On the mechanism of suggestion and hypnosis, *J. Abn. and Soc. Psychol.*, 1946, 41: 107-128.

some of the mystery removed, let us now look at a bit of the evidence.

It has been demonstrated that in so far as the electrical activity of the brain is concerned, subjects may be rendered "blind." In this experiment, advantage was taken of the fact that this electrical activity varies measurably and consistently with the opening and closing of the eyes. A subject was hypnotized while this aspect of brain function was being measured (a completely painless process) and it was discovered that the action of the brain was no different when the subject was in a deep, hypnotic trance than it was in the normal waking state. His eyes were then fastened open with adhesive tape and alternate suggestions of blindness and sight were given. When the subject was told that he was now "blind," his electroencephalogram (or EEG, the record obtained of the electrical activity of the brain) immediately took on the form characteristic of brain function when the eyes are actually closed. When he was told that he could now "see" normally, his EEG returned to the shape typical for him when his eyes were open. This alternation between "blindness" and "sightedness" was repeated over and over and each time the changes in the EEG were essentially the same as those which would have occurred had the subject actually been opening and closing his eyes while in the normal waking state. These data take on added significance when we remember that at all times the eyes were kept wide open and that the experiment took place in a well-illuminated room.<sup>5</sup> Under the suggestion of blindness, the brain of the hypnotized subject "behaved" as it would were he genuinely sightless, indicating that sense-organ function and brain activity go hand in hand.

You may recall that earlier reference was made to the multi-edition work of Flanders Dunbar: *Emotions and Bodily Changes*, Fourth Edition. Throughout this volume, case upon case of the relationship between mental and physical functions appear. If we sample through briefly, we can find evidence for the effect that, essentially, *belief* may have upon any bodily

<sup>5</sup> A. Loomis, E. Harvey, and G. Hobart, Electrical potentials of the human brain, *J. Exper. Psychol.*, 1936, 19: 249-279.

organ or process. (The following illustrations are taken from this work.)

It has been shown that ideas long forgotten, but originally accompanying anxiety, are a cause for disturbed heart conditions. In this experiment, a hypnotized subject was used. It was found that the heart rate could be increased by as much as twenty-seven beats a minute when the suggestion was given that the subject was undergoing an emotional experience. In addition, complete amnesia for the experience was induced. The subject was then told that after he had awakened he would, upon a given signal, reexperience the same emotional upset. After awakening, the signal was given. Once more the same increase in pulse rate occurred despite the fact that the subject was quite unaware of the suggestions that had been given him or of the meaning of the signal. In common terms, his heart raced and he didn't know why. When, however, he was given insight into the situation so that he knew how the increased heart rate had been brought about, the signal was no longer effective in altering the speed of his pulse.

The combining of the fluoroscope and hypnotism has resulted in interesting observations of the relationship between attitudes toward food and the digestive processes. The stomachs of the hypnotized persons were observed fluoroscopically and suggestions given bearing upon the attitude of the subjects toward the digesting food. Under these conditions, the digestive movements of the stomach ceased and even reversed direction when the subjects were told that they strongly disliked the food just eaten. When they were then told that in actuality the food was good and that they particularly liked it, the normal movements of digestion reestablished themselves. It was found possible through hypnotic suggestion to change the action of the stomach from the relative quiescence of aversion to the powerful churning movements of relish within one minute of time. This, of course, indicates the potent effect that our attitudes toward food can have upon our digestion of it.

Your author once attended a Sunday night snack in the Freshman Men's Dormitory of a midwestern university. At the end of the meal,



a plump youth across from him leaned back and with considerable satisfaction commented upon the excellence of the chicken salad that had made up the entree. Someone at the table said: "But that was tuna fish." The youth half-rose and in some anguish exclaimed: "Tuna fish! *Tuna Fish!!* But I don't *like* tuna fish!" He paled and rather rapidly left the dining room.

In similar fashion, persons who were subject to small blisters about the mouth as a consequence of unpleasant emotional experience were hypnotized and told that they were undergoing such experience. A day or so later, the usual blisters were present. It is interesting that such blisters could *not* be produced unless the hypnotic suggestions also were accompanied by suggestions of an unpleasant emotional experience. Apparently, emotional activity may prevent the operation of the defensive mechanisms of the body which ordinarily function to prevent the development of lesions of this kind.

In like manner asthmatic attacks have been induced, skin eruptions of all sorts produced, and changes in body temperature and in body metabolism brought about. All of these and more have occurred to people when, under hypnosis, they have been told that they were going through an emotional experience it was known they feared and dreaded. Through this technique, it is possible to reproduce the symptoms of any nervous disorder (and even so-called physical ones) and thus to study cause and effect relationships between environmental conditions and the reactions of the person. Thus we have seen that mind and body act as a whole and that the way people feel about things in large part can determine what their bodily reactions to these things may be.

### **MINDED BEHAVIOR**

It may help in clarifying how mental attitudes can result in bodily disturbance if we look at the more simple expressions we can find when animals lower on the scale than man are studied. First, however, let us be certain to understand that mindedness, as the interrelationship between the functioning of sense organs, muscles, and nervous system, is not by any

means limited solely to man. Any organism that has a central nervous system can show "minded" behavior if it can demonstrate the ability to retain and to use the effects of past experience. In short, any organism that shows it can benefit from experience, that it can *learn*, demonstrates minded behavior in its rudimentary sense at least. Since all creatures with backbones (and many who have none) demonstrate more or less ability to profit from experience, a broad interpretation of minded behavior must include many, many organisms other than man. In any event, when infrahuman creatures are used as subjects, it is possible to study the development and course of emotionally aroused bodily conditions. Let us therefore make a brief excursion into the genesis of neurotic behavior in lower animals as well as in man.

Traditionally, such experimentation began in 1914 in the laboratory of the great Russian physiologist, Ivan Pavlov, the father of the "conditioned reflex." As is often the case, the discovery of what has been termed "experimental neurosis" in animals was a bit fortuitous. One of Pavlov's students, having trained a dog to respond specifically to a circle and not respond to an ellipse, was interested in determining the fineness of discrimination the animal could make between the two. Therefore, the ellipse gradually was made increasingly circular, and the dog's ability to discriminate was tested as each change was made. As the two figures more and more approached equality, the animal became increasingly restless in the experimental situation and finally underwent a dramatic change in behavior. Where hitherto the dog had been quiet and coöperative during experimentation, it now began to struggle, whine, and to bite at the apparatus about it, showing every sign of canine distress and uncertainty. Furthermore, the animal became irritable and quick-tempered when in its normal living quarters despite the fact that in the past it has been a most even-dispositioned beast.

Since the only change that had taken place was in the experimental insistence that the animal "solve" a problem too difficult for it, it would appear that this unsolvable conflict situation was the determining factor in the animal's behavior.

This observation, which developed rather incidentally to a study designed to measure sensory discrimination, established a laboratory technique that has led to a greatly increased understanding of the way in which organisms respond to situations of stress. It should be noted, also, that there was no real threat to the animal except that which developed out of the animal's inability to cope with the situation. The stress then largely was internally induced while the resultant behavior was characteristically inefficient, disorganized, and served only to intensify the "problem." This state of affairs is typical of neurosis.

In similar fashion, it has been shown that any animal, from rat to man, when placed in a problem situation for which it has no ready means of response, to which it cannot adequately adjust, and from which there is no means of escape, will develop reaction patterns characteristic of "neurotic" behavior. The rat forced to make a "choice" when no choice is really possible often breaks down completely and goes into a veritable running fit. Likewise cats, after having been trained to eat under standardized conditions and then suddenly being "punished" for eating under them, show marked changes in behavior characterized by a withdrawal, attempts to escape from the apparatus, refusal to eat despite great hunger, and failure to show the "normal" feline interest in a caged mouse.

Sheep, when faced with a discrimination too difficult to make, develop symptoms of withdrawal, an increased heart rate, stubbornness and restlessness. Further, these changes may persist throughout the life of the animal. A chimpanzee, when confronted with a difficult problem, repeatedly attempted to solve it, failed, and then developed a genuine temper tantrum, rolling about and screaming. Subsequently, this animal refused to coöperate in the situation and had to be forced into the experimental cage. Children when asked to make discriminations beyond their capacities responded in somewhat similar fashion, showing negativism, surliness, disobedience, and excitement. These behavior patterns were retained as long as the "threat" of making the choice endured. Human

adults, experimentally placed in a situation greatly out of line with their accustomed habits and attitudes, showed emotional upsets involving anxiety, disorganization, and tears, which approached typical neurotic reactions.

The evidence from investigations such as these forces the conclusion that minded organisms, made to deal with situations for which they are inadequately equipped through either training or constitution, tend to show serious behavior disturbances as a result of conflict between the drive to accomplish and feelings of inadequacy engendered by repeated failure. Under such conditions, the organism, under pressure to cope with a problem for which it is unprepared, breaks down, shows increasingly inadequate responses, and loses its feeling of "belongingness" within the situation.

### **SOCIALIZED BEHAVIOR**

An important factor in the appearance of these disorganized reactions appears to reside in the necessity for the organism to develop a form of "socialized" behavior before the conflictful situation has become meaningful to it. Obviously, before a cat, dog, or sheep can be experimented upon, it has to be trained to accept the "personal" limitations imposed by the laboratory demands. That is, the animal must relinquish some of its autonomy of control when it submits to remaining quietly in the apparatus. It must learn to respond in terms of pressures external to its own desires; it must learn to do what is "expected" of it. This learned relinquishing of free, self-determined behavior appears to be crucial to the development of an experimental neurosis.

This new behavior, originally forced upon the organism from without, comes through experience to be self-imposed and the animal freely, even eagerly, enters the experimental room and often climbs into the apparatus unassisted where it awaits the beginning of the day's session with all the signs of willingness and coöperation. The animal "feels at home" in the situation, has developed patterns of behavior for coping with it, and has absorbed these patterns into its behavior repertory. That is, it has formed habitual ways of dealing with

a specific situation; ways which, to date, have proved effective. In this habit formation, the organism has accepted within itself, i.e., internalized, what were heretofore external rules. As we shall see, this process is identical with that through which socialized behavior develops in the human.

So long as this behavior, which is a new-brain function in cat or man, continues to be adequate for the demands of the situation, all is well. However, just as soon as the situation changes and these newly learned habits cease to be effective in dealing with it and no means of escape are available, the organism, after some floundering about, commonly reverts back to the emotionalized conduct typical of old-brain function. It will be recalled that in so far as the old brain is concerned, all that matters is what the organism wants to do. Hence, its behavior becomes nonadjustive when regarded in terms of the "social" situation but is usually most effective in meeting the individual need of the animal; i.e., to escape from intolerable stress.

Thus, in lower animal or in man, when the learned, socialized ways of behaving no longer are effective in dealing with environmental problems, original organismic self-determination prevails and the body responds with all of its energy, heeding only the inner demand for escape. Consequently, when life situations develop with which the organism has no readily available way of coping, the self-centered behavior subserved by the old brain gains ascendance, and the individual functions solely in terms of its own feelings of stress, without much regard for the dictates of "society."

It was said above that the internalizing of external standards, the giving up of what the animal "wants" to do for what it is "expected" to do, was an important aspect in the development of neurotic behavior in infrahuman forms of animal life. This process of the relinquishing of autonomy in behavior is an integral part of any training situation. We shall see that the same phenomena are involved in the development of socialized behavior in the human infant that were shown to be involved in the training of lower animals to submit to laboratory experimentation.

At birth, the human organism is essentially an old-brain

creature. As all parents know, the concept that there are particular times and places for defecation or urination simply does not exist for the infant. Only through a process of training does the child learn that he must inhibit his "natural" tendencies until a specific situation is present. This process necessitates the individual's incorporation into his own behavior of external regulations. As was true of the experimental animals previously described, these regulations, which originally arose outside of the organism itself, become internalized as an intrinsic part of the person. If this process, here illustrated by toilet training, be multiplied by the almost infinite number of behavior patterns requisite for adequate adult existence, we see the extent to which the human organism has to give up self-determination as it grows from the human animal of early infancy to the socialized human being of adulthood.

Harking back to the studies of "experimental neurosis" once again, we discover that things go smoothly as long as these internalized regulations serve to permit the organism to meet the demands of its life environment. We find also that if and when these learned behaviors fail to make for adaptation to problem situations which the organism must somehow face, breakdown occurs and a "neurosis" develops. Thus, we see again that the ways in which forms of animal life meet the demands of adult living are conditioned by what they have been "taught." Since the training of the human infant involves precisely this same internalizing process, the moral would seem to be clear. If we wish the human adult to be able to face and to meet life on a realistic and adequate plane, then the training we give him must itself be realistic and adequate in terms of the usual problems that arise.

Inasmuch as most of the demands life makes of us are well known and therefore predictable, only lethargy and the dead hand of the past can prevent us from forestalling much of the misery occasioned by so-called "nervous disorders." With the "know-how" for adequate adjustment available to whoever is willing to seek it, we continue to struggle with and to bungle our lives, placing the blame everywhere except where it reasonably belongs—upon ourselves.

In all of this discussion, we have seen that behavior is determined in large measure by the knowledge and meaning the organism has extracted from its past experience. We have tried to show that organisms act as units and that what happens to their mental economy immediately is reflected in their bodily behavior; that body and mind work together in or out of harmony with reality, depending upon what has happened in the life experiences of the individual.

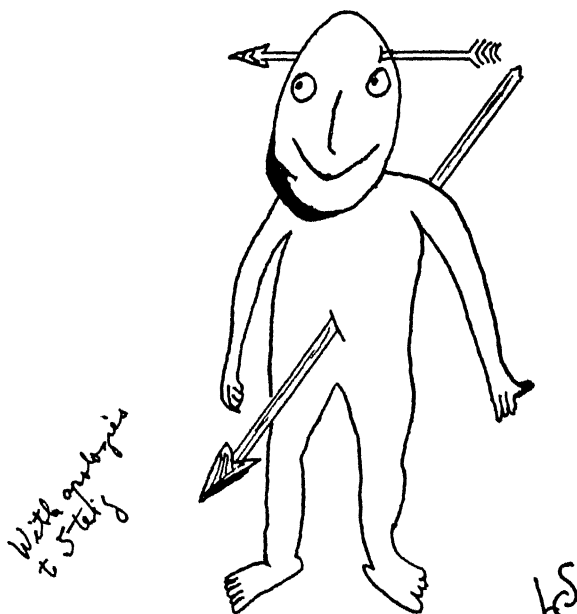
### PSYCHOSOMATICS

The technical term applied to this mind-body interrelationship is "Psychosomatics" (a combination of two Greek words: Psyche or mind and Soma or body), which implies an intimate relationship between psychological phenomena, such as emotional attitudes, and structural changes in the body, i.e., changes in the heart rate, upsets in digestion, and altered brain activity. Since both mental and physical changes take place in the same biological organism, it is only reasonable that they should be but different aspects of the same process. We shall see that given sufficient time and stress, emotionally induced alterations in bodily function may become irreversible and hence permanent.

It has already been indicated that approximately 10 percent of our population is in need of psychotherapy. It is also estimated that two-thirds of the patients who visit the physician need active psychotherapeutic treatment along with the usual medical care.<sup>6</sup> The problem of psychosomatic illness therefore involves something more than idle speculation and a mere playing about with words. It is genuine tragedy to those afflicted, although it is largely preventable. Consequently, the

<sup>6</sup> In a private communication, a prominent surgeon placed this estimate at 90 percent. Further, an examination of 450 unselected patients admitted to medical and surgical wards in military hospitals revealed that neurotic behavior patterns were complicating the medical picture in 30 percent of the cases. B. Mittlelmann, et al., Personality and psychosomatic disturbances in patients in medical and surgical wards, *Psychosom. Med.*, 1945, 7: 220-223. Since, however, the human organism is a single energy system, there is continuous and intimate reaction between the emotions and the body. Hence, anything that affects one, instantly and automatically affects the other. In this sense, all disease is "psychosomatic" in nature and all effective therapy is "psychosomatic" in function.

problem should be faced openly and considered frankly. Toward this end, let us examine some of the common forms of psychosomatic illness. The point of this will be further to illustrate the essential unity of the mind-body and to demonstrate the ease with which man may become an emotionally



MY ILLNESS IS PURELY PSYCHOSOMATIC

FIGURE 8.

driven creature. Let us not, however, go overboard in the process. We humans have a consistent habit of overdoing an initial enthusiasm. So, while it certainly seems to be true that all illness has psychosomatic aspects, *it does not follow* therefore that all illness entirely is psychosomatic in nature despite the apparent implication of the preceding footnote. Just keep in mind that there are very real organisms that cause very real



disease and that every once in a while a person gets hurt without any history whatsoever of "accident proneness." By all means let us avoid the condition portrayed in the cartoon on page 78.

**Hypertension (High Blood Pressure)**

As we know by now, one of the physiological aspects of emotionality is an increase in blood pressure that endures so

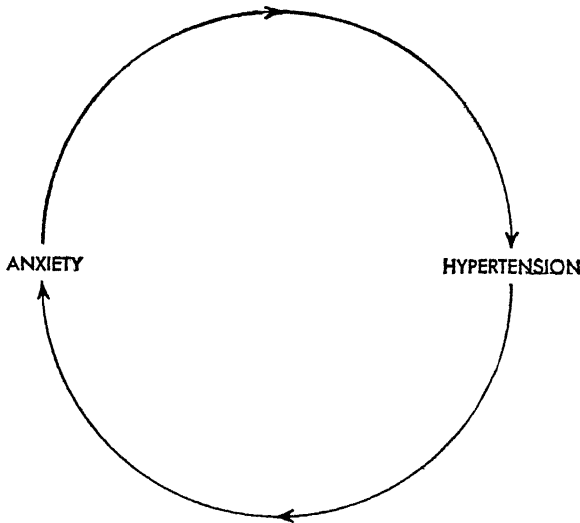


FIGURE 9.

long as the emotional condition continues. A person, then, who develops a rather constant state of anxiety because his output falls short of the perfectionistic goal he has set for himself, or because of conflict between an inner feeling of hostility toward people and an external, socialized compulsion to be courteous, may show a typical picture of hypertension. The vicious circle that we have mentioned before readily establishes itself in these cases. Let us assume that for some reason a person lives for a while in a heightened emotional state. After a while, his energy runs out and he may go to a physician for a

checkup. Because of his emotionalized living, his blood pressure is raised and the hypertension is discovered. He may be told to "take it easy," and a sedative prescribed. The knowledge of the hypertension itself now becomes an additional source of anxiety. This serves but to maintain the heightened blood pressure and may even increase it still further. Anxiety now increases and the circle is complete. Figure 9 may help in making this clear.

### ***Essential Hypertension***

We must recognize that the hypertension of which we are speaking is the so-called "essential hypertension" for which no organic cause can be discovered. That is, kidneys, liver, and heart appear to be normal and there is no evidence of hardening of the arteries (arteriosclerosis). However, we are told (*Time*, August 11, 1947, p. 48) that 95 percent of all cases of hypertension have their origin in emotional factors. What we have to say, therefore, applies to most hypertensive individuals.

Just as you and I can develop new habits when we are faced with new situational demands, so too our circulatory systems may, under long-continued stress, adapt themselves to an altered level of function. When such adaptation becomes full blown, we speak of chronic illness. Under such conditions, our heart and arteries adjust themselves to the emotionalized reactions we make. When this happens, time no longer heals. Rather the passage of time alone (in the absence of self-understanding or insight on our part) augments the difficulty. This is because emotional living feeds upon itself and increases both in intensity and in scope until breakdown occurs. Time and rest by themselves are no help whatsoever in the treatment of chronically emotional (neurotic) behavior.

A reasonable estimate appears to be that some 25 percent of all people beyond age fifty die of emotionally induced hypertension or some complication thereof. Even cancer kills fewer at this age level. Keep in mind also that we speak of essential hypertension for which no organic cause can be

discovered. The high blood pressure arises out of faulty emotional attitudes. This is indeed a commentary upon man's rationality! Some of us, many too many of us, seem actually to court death. That inadequate but basically preventable adjustment to life should kill one-quarter of us within a specific age range hardly is evidence for the inherent rationality of man. Since many of these fatalities could have been prevented by more effective training early in life, we face one of the psychological crimes man commits against himself. Unfortunately, unless intelligent and intensive action is taken, it is also a crime that carries an automatic and irrevocable death penalty.

### ***Hypertensive Personality***

To further our understanding, let us look at what has been called the "hypertensive personality." People suffering from this illness seem to present a fairly common personality structure. Often they present an exterior of self-control, reserve, courtesy, and warmth. Inwardly however, they feel a compulsive drive toward perfectionism in their own output. Added to this is a buried, but not dead, feeling of hostility toward and contempt for their fellow men. In a way, they try simultaneously both to please and to rebel against life. Unfortunately, the emotional energy aroused by this basic incompatibility expresses itself through their hearts.

However, let us not paint this picture in a too dismal color. When the hypertensive person comes for help early in his high-blood-pressure career, psychological consultation can be quite effective. The person is taught how to face life more realistically and to recognize the nature of his inner feelings even though he does not approve of them. When the difficulty has continued so long that irreversible changes have taken place in the person's circulatory system, much still can be done. While the hypertension as such may not be markedly reduced, the person's attitudes can be improved. The danger that he may worry himself into his grave therefore strongly is decreased.

A man in his late twenties developed hypertension after an operation. It was discovered that he was deeply fearful of post-operative infection. While there was no *reason* for this dread, he could not shake it, he became greatly disturbed, and his blood pressure maintained itself consistently above normal. Of course, he was treated early in the onset of the illness. As his anxiety decreased, his blood pressure returned to a normal level. Since then he has had but occasional flare-ups, usually subsequent to frustrations met in his work.

A fifty-year-old man had been hypertensive for some years. Examination into his life indicated that he felt strongly hostile toward his wife. Further investigation indicated that the hostility resulted from his conviction that she continuously was unfaithful to him. More detailed discussion revealed that he actually was "projecting" his own infidelities upon her. Once he was able to face this psychological mechanism squarely and admit to himself the real situation, his concern and hostility diminished markedly. However, his hypertension remained chronic. Nevertheless, the reduction in his "worry" permitted him to live and work with reasonable effectiveness. (See Dunbar, *Emotions and Bodily Changes*, 3rd ed., pp. 127 and 133.)

It very much looks as though we shall live with hypertension just so long as we continue to train people to adjust to life in ineffective ways. It is just as equally evident that when we make use of the therapeutic techniques available, we may stave off the fate that emotional living holds in store for us. Even though the old-brain does become dominant in a person's behavior, that person may yet conquer himself if he is willing to apply the principles of good mental management that the potential latent within his new brain makes possible. We know that insight into our conflicts leads to a reduction of anxiety and hence to a decrease in the physiological commotion anxiety inevitably induces. Fear, you know, tends to vanish when faced with fact.

Intelligence alone, however, is not sufficient. Even the most brilliant person cannot apply what he does not know—or what he refuses to admit. It becomes imperative that any person who is living at the level of his thalamus, seek out and ask for the help that is available. When we get really snarled in the ever-tightening net of emotional living, we cannot work ourselves free without assistance.

A well-known scientist has suffered from hypertension for the past several years. The man is a study in contrasts, being deferential and polite to his peers and superiors but inconsiderate of his subordinates. Superficially, he presents a picture of the quintessence of charm and courtesy although a somewhat sarcastic tone often underlies his conversation. He obtains "sick leave" with some regularity and often is forced to ask his assistants to substitute for him in meeting professional obligations because of headaches and general feelings of illness. To date, no organic cause has been discovered to account for his elevated blood pressure and since he presents almost a clinical picture of the essential hypertensive personality, one suspects that behind his façade of politeness there lurks a rather supreme contempt for his fellow man.

### ***Peptic Ulcer***

The digestive tract is possibly the most common location of psychosomatic complaints. We already have seen how this system reflects the person's emotional tone. Actually, the gastrointestinal system often is referred to as "the sounding board of the emotions." In the evolutionary sense, this system is the oldest one we possess. Consequently, we might well suspect that such an ancient structure should have intimate connection with the old-brain. That it does have such intimacy, we can show by the following observations.

An employee in a medical laboratory, whose esophagus was closed off because of a childhood injury, had an opening into his stomach through which food could be placed. Since part of his stomach was turned outwards in the making of this opening in his body wall, the changes occurring in the stomach subsequent to various environmental situations could be observed. When the subject was frightened by the thought of losing his job, the lining of the stomach became pale and its activity decreased. When he was angered by an arrogant physician, the lining became red and engorged with blood; the production of acid increased and vigorous activity of the stomach muscles began. These latter reactions occurred whenever the subject became angry, resentful, or anxious. It was also shown that if, under these conditions, a bit of mucus which covers and protects the stomach's inner surface were wiped away, the acid

## 84 *Problems of Human Adjustment*

secreted during the emotional state began to attack the exposed surface, thus forming the beginnings of a stomach ulcer.<sup>7</sup>

There is evidence to indicate that most gastrointestinal upsets have an emotional base. Probably half of the people who complain of pain in or about the abdomen are victims of unfortunately emotional adjustments. In fact, there are some four or five million persons in the country at the moment who have active peptic ulcers. Now, diagnosis is reasonably accurate and treatment reasonably effective. Therefore, a sizable number of stomach sufferers could find relief and potential cure were they relieved from the emotional torment of anxiety. It is no uncommon experience for specialists in gastric disturbances to find about half of their patients to possess no demonstrable physical illness. Their pain is a reaction to emotional upset.

Such people also show somewhat common personality characteristics. They often are self-drivers, ambitious, and frequently present an exterior of great emotional control. Inwardly, the usual picture is one of strong feelings of failure to achieve, of resentment, anxiety, and low self-esteem. They often are energetic workers (although the energy may not be well directed) who drive themselves mercilessly. Consequently, they often are both the envy and despair of their working associates. Nevertheless, these persons still *feel* that they are not accomplishing. The anxiety thus developed as a result of a sense of frustration builds internal tensions and these often become expressed through gastric disturbance. With such people, it is necessary that they strike a more effective balance between their self-imposed goals and their actual achievements. When they have done this, their anxiety often is reduced and much of the inner tension disappears. Their gastrointestinal system now becomes free to perform its normal function unimpeded by the demands of emotional stress.

A business executive, known for his drive and charm, actually spent much of his time and energy running about in tight little circles. He worked too hard and he played too hard. Under alcohol, much of his charm disappeared and he criticized his colleagues

<sup>7</sup> H. Wolf, Emotions and Gastric Functions, *Science*, 1943, 98: 481-484.

viciously. After a few months on his merry-go-round, his ulcer would act up and he would return to his diet and a semblance of normal living. He would also come to the company psychologist for some "hand-holding" sessions. Between the two remedies, he shortly would feel able to return to his wheel-spinning and gear-grinding ways. Over the past five years, this cycle has repeated itself some half-dozen times. At present, he is hospitalized and the outlook is not good. It is interesting that his hospitalizing occurred within a month after he had been relieved of a considerable segment of his responsibilities. Ironically, he was relieved of them because management felt that his health did not permit him to do the kind of job the company wanted.

In a sense, this man is in active process of committing suicide. He knows that the pace he sets himself is too great but he is quite unable to relax to any appreciable extent. The old habit is just too strong. After his periods of diets and psychological consultation, he slows down for a time but gradually picks up speed until shortly he is back in the old whirl. In his case, neither diet, medication, nor psychotherapy has any enduring effect and he is a very poor insurance risk indeed. The tragedy is that he is a man of unusual basic ability who is so afraid of failure that he will kill himself before he will accept it. Yet (and as we shall see, this is common in neurosis), the very behavior by which he strives to avoid failure *but promises it*.

The usual ulcer case is somewhat different. Although symptoms *will* recur despite close adherence to the usual diet, this recurrence commonly can be prevented in some entirety when medication and psychotherapy go hand in hand. Both seem to be necessary because the treatment of individual organs within the body often is to small avail. Only when the body is treated *as a whole* can lasting recovery occur. While symptomatic therapy may relieve, it cannot effect a cure. (Taking aspirin for *chronic* headache is symptomatic treatment. It is much, much smarter to go to a physician and confess all.) Whenever disturbed emotions make up an important part of the person's illness, treatment of the illness *as such* will not be completely effective.

**Colitis**

Colitis is typified by diarrhea or constipation accompanied by pain and the presence of mucus in the stools. Occasionally, blood may be observed. Colitis is a bodily reaction to stress and is closely related to feelings of anxiety and resentment. Those who complain of colitis seem to have deep, almost insatiable needs for affection. They want to be completely loved exactly as they are, without change on their part. They often seek to obtain this love through humbleness, modesty, and submission. Inwardly, however, they equally often feel a rather strong resentment and hostility that they appear to be afraid openly to express. Except through their colons, they show little aggressiveness. Their energy levels are low and they seem to need more than the usual amount of sleep. There is convincing evidence for the emotional background of colitis. In fact, the term itself was coined by Dr. Axel Munthe to represent an illness that was becoming fashionable as the fad for appendicitis was dying out.<sup>8</sup> Most persons who are told that they have colitis suffer from a neurosis quite in the absence of organic illness.

A youth of 23, the son of a domineering mother, came to a clinic because of severe cramps in his abdomen coupled with frequency of bowel movements containing mucus. His symptoms were discovered to have coincided with a violent disagreement with his mother concerning the girl to whom he was engaged. Since the mother did not approve of her prospective daughter-in-law, the boy's life in the parental home consisted of an endless series of recriminations and scoldings. He made no attempt to "fight back" but reported that his mother's behavior was a source of intense resentment. After treatment which consisted in part of discussion aimed at informing him about the mind-body relationships involved and also the interviewing of the parents, his symptoms ceased; particularly after the mother had been shown how to accept her son's fiancée.<sup>9</sup>

Psychosomatically, it is quite important that the abdominal trouble this youth experienced should cease as soon as an

<sup>8</sup> A. Munthe, *The Story of San Michele*, New York, Dutton, 1930.

<sup>9</sup> S. Cobb, *Borderlands of Psychiatry*, Cambridge, Harv. Univ. Press, 1943.



understanding was reached between his mother and himself concerning the girl he expected to marry. He could not outwardly express the resentment he felt toward his mother's interference because he had habitually submitted to her. It is an organismic axiom that repressed emotional tension, when it is forbidden a normal outlet, will break out in the malfunctioning of some bodily organ.

### ***Bronchial Asthma***

That the respiratory system is involved in any discussion of psychosomatic disorders will come as no surprise. All of us have felt sensations of pressure in our chests during strong emotional experiences. Our chests have "tightened" and we have found difficulty in getting enough air into our lungs. We may well suspect that a distinct relationship exists between emotional living and respiratory irritations of one sort or another. There is abundant evidence to indicate that our suspicion is correct.

In part, asthma involves an allergic reaction to certain substances to which the person is especially sensitive. However, this is not the entire story. Persons have been known to undergo asthmatic attacks at the sight of an artificial rose or a plastic cat. Through the conditioning mechanism previously described, it should be possible to produce such an attack by exposure to any reasonable facsimile of the allergen (the substance or object to which the person is especially sensitive). In fact, there is a case on record of a man who suffered from hay fever during the regular ragweed pollen season *but only* during those seasons when it also happened that his mother-in-law was living in the home.<sup>10</sup> Those who show allergic reactions generally also experience difficulty in making decisions, vague feelings of uneasiness, and dread of the routine of the day. Such persons also often carry about repressed but intensely frustrating desires. These repressed wishes seem to serve as "trigger mechanisms" to set off an asthmatic attack

<sup>10</sup> S. Kraines, *The Therapy of the Neuroses and Psychoses*, Philadelphia, Lea and Febiger, 1943.

## 88 *Problems of Human Adjustment*

quite in the absence of the substance to which the person actually is allergic. That is, once an outlet for emotional tension has been found, it tends to perpetuate itself.

The characteristic personality traits of asthmatics seem to cluster about deep feelings of dependence, a severe lack of self-confidence, and strong anxiety. Such inner feelings can only make for a general life outlook of inadequacy and fear. With such a generalized fear of the things and events in life, it is small wonder that the emotional outlet should appear through so vital a process as respiration. Nothing is psychologically so threatening as the inability to breathe.

A plant superintendent goes wheezing about his job. So long as his duties are familiar ones (he has some 35 years of experience in this particular operation) he pants his way through in rather effective fashion. The introduction of unfamiliar methods or the addition of new responsibility changes the picture rapidly. His breathing becomes greatly labored, he flushes, perspires and makes alternate trips to the dispensary and outside the mill for fresh air. Psychological analysis of this man indicates low self-confidence, strong uncertainties, and deep fear of anything he does not "feel able to handle." Basically, he is a good-natured person and fortunately able to grin at himself and his asthma. In fact, he quite prefers the asthma (a situation he knows well) to the long and deep look into himself that psychotherapy would involve. Actually, he prefers the familiar and known over the unfamiliar, unknown and hence threatening. The man probably is right. He has worked out an adjustment of sorts to his ailment, this adjustment functions reasonably well for him, and the case is one best left alone. His exterior of good nature toward his difficulty is contagious and it is not at all uncommon when a new procedure is being discussed "topside" for someone to say: "Boy! Is old——going to wheeze over *this* one!"

### ***Skin Disorders***

Emotional tension can be reflected in the skin. The most common symptom is excessive perspiration of the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet. You may recall that in heightened emotional states, the small blood vessels of the skin contract. This capillary constriction is felt as coldness and clam-

miness in the extremities. Consequently, the traditional "cold feet" of fear has psychosomatic reality. All of us have experienced, either in ourselves or our friends, cases where emotional excitement led to skin disturbances. These disturbances may have ranged from simple blushing to irritating and lengthy hivelike rashes. There can be little doubt but that emotional conditions can so influence the skin that its entire physiology becomes disturbed.

Those who respond to emotional situations with changes in the condition of their skins usually also tend to be rather rigid. Consequently, they are easily disturbed by any change in the ordinary routine of their lives. Such people have tried to crystallize and channelize their living in the hope that they therefore always will have everything under control. Whenever the threat of deviation from this routine occurs, they respond with rather violent internal resistance. Inwardly, they are most upset although they may go along with apparent willingness. However, the internal disturbance often expresses itself through itching rashes or welts on their skin. These persons tend to reject responsibility and effort because either will introduce changes in their established life patterns. Remember, they have tried to protect themselves against such change by developing rigid, routinized behavior. Disturbances in the function or appearance of the skin, as well as of the other organs discussed, can arise out of unreleased emotional tension.

A young woman, upon rather slight emotional provocation, would blush furiously and within a period of minutes, elongated, raised welts would appear on her forearms. This rash would endure for hours or days, depending upon the intensity of the emotional upset. The attack would be particularly severe if the emotion aroused were one of resentment or anger which she experienced whenever her desires were thwarted. If she were not permitted to do something precisely when and as she wished to, within a few minutes she could be seen vigorously scratching the skin of her arms although she may have acquiesced smilingly to the change in her plans. She had been born late in the life of her mother and had grown up under the guidance of parents who were already approaching old age. She be-

came accustomed to a routine existence, changes in which were not to be tolerated, but neither was rebellion. She developed the habit of giving in pleasantly regardless of her real feelings, and quite unknown to her, her emotional suppression found outlet in her "hives."

### EMOTIONAL FACTORS

We now have seen how emotional living can affect our circulatory, digestive, and respiratory systems, as well as the condition and appearance of our skin. While these illustrations by no means exhaust a possible listing of psychosomatic processes, they should serve our purpose adequately.<sup>11</sup>

Ample evidence has been presented to indicate that the emotional factors in living have much to do with our general health. Furthermore, it has been shown that, upon occasion, emotion may have everything to do with it. We should now be able to understand the pressing need for adequate and effective emotional training as preparation for the facing of the problems of life. The need for universal mental hygiene programs is obvious. We must come to understand our own nature and come to possess the knowledge necessary to efficient ways of dealing with it.

Basically, most of our difficulties arise from overwhelming

<sup>11</sup> A few other conditions showing psychosomatic aspects are: the common cold, sexual impotence and frigidity, goiter, and accidental injury. It also has been shown that the functions of the internal bodily organs are susceptible to the conditioned response technique and can be "trained" to respond to various external situations. This is quite in line with the observation that "exposure" to heart disease (being around someone who has a heart ailment) is more likely to be a causal factor in the development of cardiac illness than is a family history of heart trouble itself.

More complete discussion of the psychosomatic question can be found in: F. Dunbar, *Mind and Body: Psychosomatic Medicine*, New York, Random House, 1947, and H. Miles, S. Cobb, and C. Harley (eds.), *Case Histories in Psychosomatic Medicine*, New York, Norton, 1952.

The more professionally inclined may exhaust their curiosity with: F. Dunbar, *Psychosomatic Diagnosis*, New York, Hoeber, 1943; E. Weiss, and S. English, *Psychosomatic Medicine*, Philadelphia, Saunders, 1943; F. Alexander, and T. French, *Studies in Psychosomatic Medicine*, New York, Ronald, 1948; N. Harris, (ed.), *Modern Trends in Psychological Medicine*, New York, Hoeber, 1949; A. Weider (ed.), *Contributions toward Medical Psychology*, 2 vols., New York, Ronald, 1953; F. Dunbar, *Emotions and Bodily Changes*, Fourth Ed., New York, Col. Univ. Press, 1954; M. Hamilton, *Psychosomatics*, New York, Wiley, 1955.

anxiety, and anxiety often arises out of ignorance of the actual facts. Intelligent education and training can remove much of the anxiety so many of us needlessly carry about.

That we may better understand how it is that emotional living may affect all bodily organs, let us look at some of the relationships involved. You will recall that when we were discussing the basic nature of man we showed, through the biological structure itself, why it is that emotion and feeling so easily are evoked. Now let us examine the bodily mechanisms that account for the physiological diffuseness and universality of emotional states.

A brief description of Figure 10 on page 92 will show how the reverberations of emotional living may alter the functioning of any bodily organ. The connecting and coördinating mechanisms diagrammed in the drawing principally illustrate old-brain activity.

### **AUTONOMIC SYSTEM**

The part of the nervous system we are about to discuss is common to organisms from earthworm to man. It is the oldest and hence most independent part of the entire nervous system. It carries out its functions quite without awareness on our part. As you may suspect, this section of our nervous system, being well within ancient tradition, has a highly important role to play in emotion—our oldest mode of expression. This ancient and automatically functioning segment of our nervous system consists of a series of groups of nerve cells (ganglia—Autonomic Chain Ganglia in the diagram) strung along the spinal cord. As you can see, these groups of nerve cells send nerve fibers to all bodily organs.

It is interesting (but not unexpected) that this system finds representation in the brain within the thalamus. This organ, remember, is the relaying station where emotional expression is integrated into patterns of emotional behavior. This system, the *autonomic nervous system*, essentially is under the guidance of the old brain. However, as the sketch shows, fibers run from the thalamus to the cerebral cortex of the new brain. These

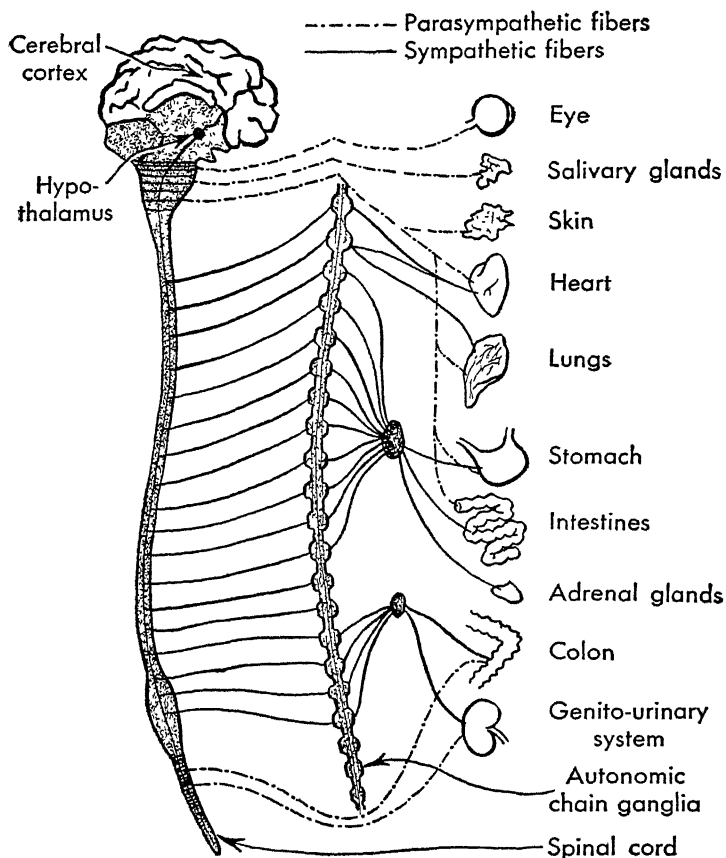


FIGURE 10. Schematic Diagram of Autonomic Nervous System and Its Connections (Greatly Simplified). (Modified from H. Warren and L. Carmichael, *Fundamentals Of Human Psychology*, Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1930, p. 33. Reproduced by permission of the publishers.)

fibers and their connections make possible the voluntary control of emotional expression (being happy or sad and *not* showing it). More importantly, some control of emotional feeling may be developed under appropriate learning conditions, as the reëducation of psychotherapy attests. However, our primary interest here is to show that every organ of the body receives fibers from the autonomic structure.

The three divisions of the autonomic nervous system are indicated by the shading. The uppermost division (the cranial) and the lowermost (the sacral) make up the parasympathetic system while the central division (thoracolumbar) constitutes what is known as the sympathetic system. Functionally, the parasympathetic and the sympathetic systems work in opposition to each other. That is, when one is operative, the other is not.

Notice that most of the bodily organs illustrated have double connections, one with the sympathetic and one with the parasympathetic. It is therefore possible for these organs to be activated by whichever system is dominant at the moment. Remember, however, that just as with the mind-body, neither system functions entirely alone and in the complete absence of the other. Nevertheless, in states of heightened emotion, the sympathetic system dominates the body.

The opposition between the two systems arises out of the fact that the parasympathetic system underlies what we can call "peacetime" bodily functions (ample flow of salivary and digestive juices, rhythmic gastrointestinal movements, normal heart rate and blood pressure, easy dilation of skin capillaries making for feelings of bodily warmth and comfort, and smooth, even respiratory action). When the sympathetic system goes into activity, the body is placed on a "wartime" economy and the already described physiological changes of emotion occur (increased heart rate, elevated blood pressure, increased blood sugar content, more rapid respiration, decrease in digestive processes, and the activation of the adrenal glands whose secretion, adrenalin, serves to promote and maintain these changes).

As you can see in the diagram, sympathetic fibers run to all important body organs. Consequently, you can understand how it is that the effects of long-continued emotion can play such havoc with normal bodily functions. You may also see diagrammed the price of emotional living. To the extent that we tend to respond to life *emotionally*, to the same extent do we train our old brain in habits of dominance. It makes sense to assume that the longer we have so trained our old brain, the

more difficult will it be to break the habit. Clinical and experimental evidence shows this to be true. The older the habit, the more deeply imbedded it is and the more effort it takes to break it. This is why the hope for cure in the neurotic is some function of the length of time he has been that way.

However, the mechanism for old-brain control exists in each of us. The fibers running between the thalamus and the cerebral cortex constitute this possibility. It follows therefore, that only misguided instruction permits us to attain adulthood while still reacting emotionally to life. We can train either the old brain or the new brain in dominance; it is largely a question of how realistic is our knowledge and our approach. Realistic knowledge and realistic attack solve most problems and train the new brain in the maintenance of control.

### **EMOTION AND LEARNING**

We know that emotion and learning (in the broad sense) are antithetical. When we are in a state of heightened emotion, we learn with difficulty and in inefficient ways. Furthermore, strong emotion paralyzes the cerebral cortex (functionally decorticates) and such learning as may occur under it must be handled by subcortical levels. Subcortical learning can occur but it is learning that is *highly specific* to time and place. It makes for rigid, stereotyped behavior that can appear only under narrow and highly specific conditions. Cortical learning, on the other hand, is broad rather than specific and plastic rather than rigid. In essence, cortical learning has a plastic and adaptable nature that aligns it with the principles of effective living we shortly shall discuss.

Since neurotic behavior often results from learning that occurs under emotional conditions, we can understand something of its persistent and stereotyped nature. The moral is apparent. If we wish for persistent, nonadjustive, and generally ineffective behavior, learning should occur during emotional states. If we wish for plastic, adaptable, and generally effective behavior, learning must occur under conditions where there is as little emotion as possible. Unhappily, much



of child training is administered under the former circumstances.

In fairness, however, it must be indicated that a study of child-training practices in a group of upper-middle-class homes showed a decrease in the amount of emotion involved in parent-child discipline situations when parent and grandparent training practices were compared. It is also important to recognize that all of the parents involved were college-trained people and presumably possessed somewhat more realistic knowledge than usually is the case. Even so, these parents still failed to recognize the child as an individual and tended to use their greater size and strength in their attempts to control the youngsters. Consequently, parent-child conflict in drives for power was quite common.<sup>12</sup>

The final result of emotionalized training for the problems of life has been dramatized beautifully by André Gide. In his play, *The Trial*, a man is convicted of a crime, the nature of which he knows nothing, by judges equally as ignorant. Replace the victim in this play by any maladjusted person in our culture. The judges then become the great mass of our population.

We have described in some detail the physiological boobytraps that lie in the path for those of us who attempt to live our lives emotionally. However, as we shall see later, this does not exhaust the snares that may await the emotionally immature. In contrast, let us now turn to a description of the factors that make up the well-adjusted personality. The good adjustment about to be defined will use the term "good" as synonymous with the psychosomatic integrity of the body and the social effectiveness of the resultant behavior.

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## 5. REALISTIC LIVING

Reason's whole pleasure,  
all the joys of sense  
Lie in three words—  
health, peace and competence.  
—Pope, *Essay on Man*

**A**S WE HAVE IMPLIED THROUGHOUT THE PREVIOUS discussions, the mentally healthy person is one whose new brain tends to govern his behavior. In such a person, harmony exists between his inner wishes and socially acceptable conduct. His goals are set in terms of his actual abilities and he finds pleasure in all aspects of living. We shall get into a detailed description of well-adjusted behavior a bit later. For now, let us only say that the well-adjusted person is one who meets life on a realistic rather than a wishful plane.

Any attempt to describe adequate adjustment inevitably must make use of words that have become part and parcel of our everyday vocabularies. As we all know, we tend to define words used in ordinary conversation with a "You know what I mean" and generally to use words with relatively little precision. It becomes important, therefore, that we have a common understanding of the meanings of some words before we begin to use them. Do not regard this as an academic insistence upon nicety of expression; just remember that accuracy in communication hinges upon the interpretation of the words used.

We already have used most of these words in the hope that they would be understood in terms of their contexts. However, we now must face the necessity of deciding exactly what we shall mean by such terms as "normal" and "abnormal"; "adjustment" and "maladjustment." We shall discover that the first pair of these words involves highly ambiguous con-

cepts and that therefore consistency in their use is difficult. Fortunately, this difficulty is not so serious for the latter pair.

To most of us, the words "normal" and "abnormal" refer to directly opposite conditions. A person either is normal or he is abnormal and that is that. If such easy distinction were true, things would be simple indeed. Unfortunately, we cannot deal with the states implied by these terms in so summary a fashion. In fact, the entire "either-or" concept itself is wrong because the things and events in life just do not exist in an either-this-or-that manner. Instead, natural phenomena display characteristically *both* "this" and "that" with one or the other usually dominant. Accordingly, "normal" and "abnormal" are words that refer to *relative* rather than absolute differences. Actually, each "normal" person has seeds of the "abnormal" within him, while each "abnormal" person in many ways shows "normal" behavior. In a very real manner, the abnormal person behaves just as does the normal individual *only more so*. That is, abnormal behavior is an *exaggeration* of otherwise normal reactions. All behavior patterns spread themselves between two extremes. In the course of our lives, all of us swing between happiness and sadness, between anger and affection; we have our "good days" and our "bad days." It is normal to react to pleasant situations with enjoyment and to distressing ones with sorrow. However, when we react to *all* situations with elation or with gloom, our behavior is abnormal. Or, when our reaction is a strong *overreaction* as measured by the objective facts, we also are abnormal. In general, a normal person lives in *between* the extremes; an abnormal person lives *within* the extremes themselves.

Put another way, we can say that normal behavior is *advantageous* to the person in his society while abnormal behavior is socially *disadvantageous*. Under this definition, a person whose behavior obtains personal acceptance for him within his group is a normal person. A person whose behavior causes others to regard him as out of place or a misfit is an abnormal person. However, we must take this definition on one further step. Adequate behavior also involves the inner state of the person. Therefore, we must add that the term "normal" is applied

not only when a person *behaves* in accord with group standards but he must also *feel* that he "belongs." Normal behavior not only is socially conforming, it also carries with it feelings of belongingness. The normal person lives in accordance with social custom and feels a close kinship with the others who compose his group.

### **NORMALITY**

You may wonder whether normality must always be defined in terms of the group. May not a group itself be abnormal? Answers to this question are exceedingly difficult. However, we freely may state that whenever the regulations of the group seriously infringe upon the "rights" of man, real questions about the normality of the group may be raised. We may say that whenever group rule disallows the freedom to have an opinion and to express it, freedom to engage in the vocational, religious, and intellectual pursuits of our choice, and freedom to live without fear of punishment for our political beliefs, then that group itself is abnormal. Probably there are real limits to the extent to which morality may be determined by group opinion. Since growth is essential to good adjustment, whatever may impede it is undesirable. Consequently, whenever cultural dictates prevent an adaptation to changing circumstances, growth is stifled and decay sets in. Such stultification is indicative of maladjustment within the individual and we strongly can suspect that similar abnormality can develop within the larger society.<sup>1</sup>

Confusion is somewhat lessened when the terms *adjustment* and *maladjustment* are considered. Adjustment implies fitting-in-ness, smooth, easy operation, efficiency, and effectiveness. Maladjustment means out of alignment, impeded, poorly functioning operations, inefficiency, ineffectiveness. When we say that a person is *well adjusted*, we mean that he has fitted himself into his life environment, that he feels at home there,

<sup>1</sup> J. Halliday, *Psychosocial Medicine: A Study of a Sick Society*, New York, Norton, 1948; A. Toynbee, *A Study of History* (abridged by D. Somerville), New York, Oxford University Press, 1946.

and that his behavior is characterized by efficient and effective relationships. Conversely, the maladjusted person is one who feels out of place in his social sphere, does not readily fit into the scheme of things, and whose behavior generally is inefficient and ineffective.

From here on, we shall use the words "normal" and "good adjustment" synonymously, recognizing that they both essentially indicate feelings of belongingness and effective behavior. Likewise, the words "abnormal" and "maladjustment" will be used as equivalent and both will imply feelings of not belonging and of ineffective behavior.

Now as we shall see, it is possible for a person to fit into his interpersonal world superficially and yet to feel highly uncertain, inadequate, and afraid. It also is possible for a person to feel that he belongs and yet to show behavior patterns that tend to alienate him from his group. In either case, the term "maladjusted" is appropriate.

We shall also see that since none of us can live completely without conflict and its consequent pain, that we may experience conflict in rather severe form and yet remain quite "normal." The reason for this is that the person whose thinking and behavior exist at the level of reality will *face* his conflict and cope with it, however painful the experience. Furthermore, it is equally normal to undergo strong negative emotions such as hate, depression, and fear. It is normal to experience them because *all* of us do. No feeling or fantasy, however alien or evil, is a complete stranger to the human race. Experiencing them does no harm so long as our behavior is guided by realistically based judgment. Only when the emotion itself begins to control our behavior, *despite what we may know*, does abnormality begin to creep in.<sup>2</sup>

### TOLERANCE

Now that we have defined normality or good adjustment as general conformance to social custom, let us look at some of

<sup>2</sup> Thorough and accurate discussion of the normal-abnormal issue can be found in: L. O'Kelly, and F. Muckler, *Introduction to Psychopathology*, New York, Prentice-Hall, 1955, chap. two.

the consequences of our definition. An immediate one is the willingness to accept the fact that there must be many kinds of normality. This we must accept since as we later shall discover, tolerance is a factor in good adjustment. If the word normal is to mean "what most people do," then it is normal for the Arabian male to have more than one wife, for the male Indian of the American Northwest to magnify and flaunt his strength and material possessions, for the mother in certain Southwest Pacific tribes to "neglect" her infant, for other peoples in this area to feel it sinful and shameful to eat in public but not to be particularly concerned if seen in the sex act, and for certain tribal females in Turkey to be much more disturbed by exposure of the face than the fanny. All of these feelings and behaviors would be considered abnormal in our society but we must remember very well that the way *we* do things is not the only way that they may be done nor yet necessarily the *right* way. The willingness to accept the concept of "multinormality" marks at least the beginnings of the tolerance that is essential to effective living.

### **BALANCED LIVING**

Good adjustment primarily is achieved through *balanced living*. The maxim attributed to the ancient Greek, Solon, "nothing in excess," is appropriate. It means that the normal person finds harmonious equilibrium between his inner desires and external reality. He does not permit any *one* characteristic to so dominate his behavior that he comes to regard that single aspect of life as all important. He can be reserved but not withdrawn, friendly but not dependent, polite but not fawning, aggressive but not belligerent, and so on. Good adjustment is balanced adjustment and the resultant behavior exists between extremes and not at them. This balance can be expressed as a formula; a formula for stable living:  $A = \frac{D}{R}$ .

*A* stands for adjustment, *D* for life demands, and *R* for reaction. Good adjustment means that the person neither over- nor underreacts to the demands of life. Therefore when *D* over

*R* equals one, behavior is balanced and hence effective.<sup>3</sup>

This balance can be obtained only by an objective and realistic attitude toward life. With such an attitude, life events are seen clearly and accurately without the distorting effects of prejudice. Since the lenses, objective or biased, through which the adult views life are shaped by his childhood experiences, it becomes apparent that the basis of good adjustment lies in a happy family.

It is well known that the greatest single factor in the formation of life attitudes is the home. This is true whether these attitudes center around politics, religion, society, education, or whatever. As you will come to see, the happiness of the adult in measure most large is determined by his early life within the home.

A fundamentally attractive young lady is painfully shy and seclusive. Markedly introspective, she spends much of her time engaging in fantasies in which she is alone on a mountain top, looking down upon the world. She is convinced that she is much too homely to be accepted by others and regards life as exceedingly futile. She wears her hair severely plain and dresses as carelessly as possible. Everything she does and says seems designed to give an impression of complete indifference to things and people but actually she is acutely sensitive. She is unusually gifted artistically, possesses a "style" completely her own, and began to draw and paint very early in life. Her father, a "practical" man, flatly refused to permit her to "waste her time fiddling about with paint and crayons," and used any and all devices to prevent such "waste" throughout her childhood and adolescence. His attitude, maintained through the years, has led her to feel that she is somehow queer, unacceptable, of little use, and hence worthless. Although she has had several exhibits to which critics have responded favorably, she refuses to believe that anyone possibly could be interested in her painting and she often destroys her work after she has had the satisfaction of completing it.

Balance is not the only characteristic of good adjustment. It also is hallmarked by *stability*. Hence, the normal person is a stable person. He is not easily disturbed by the frustrations of

<sup>3</sup> M. Bentley, Sanity and hazard in childhood, *Amer. J. Psychol.*, 1945, 58: 212-246.



life or by the peculiarities of people. He meets and overcomes threats and thwartings without permanent disturbance. Even such events as loss of a loved one, serious illness, loss of property or position, permanent injury, or other hardship do not crush him. Certainly, some degree of sadness or depression well may appear. For a while, he may be deeply upset but ultimately his basic stability reasserts itself and he once more meets life openly and unafraid.

A 60-year-old president of a stable and most successful company wanted to retire. He was talked out of it by his working associates somewhat against his better judgment. However, he could not refuse the obligation his executives insisted that was his. He met this demand, as he had met those before it, with gracious willingness. A year later, he suffered a rather severe stroke. This has left him with impaired speech and a useless arm and leg. Yet, his spirit remains unscathed. Instead of retreating into a morass of resentment and self-pity, he has been busily engaged in various pursuits ever since he left the hospital. He literally has found a thousand things to do. Some of these are pure time-killers but others constitute distinct contribution. The important thing is that he has stayed intellectually active and alert. He has kept his perspective and his courage. He still is *doing* things. A less well-adjusted man easily could now be pitied as a "hopeless cripple." *This* man lives as a monument of inspiration to any of us whom personal disaster may strike.

History, of course, is filled with "men who have come back." Milton and blindness, Beethoven and deafness are common examples. The Russian novelist, Nikolai Ostrovsky, produced his greatest work after an illness that left him blind, partially paralyzed, and in nearly continuous pain. He also is reported as saying that the real tragedy in life was to fold up, to quit, and that he had found a measure of happiness through the defeat of his handicaps. This certainly must be true. Do *you* prize anything more than that which you earned through hard and continuous effort?

This energy or determination that keeps the well-adjusted person trying despite defeat seems also to develop out of home experiences. It was discovered during the London blitz that children who came from psychologically "good" homes sur-

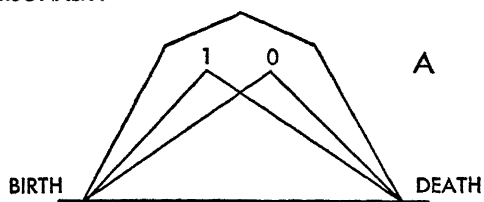
vived the bombings with relatively little shock. Other youngsters whose home lives were less fortunate tended to develop serious personality disturbances as an aftermath of blitz attacks. In the good homes, the children were treated as accepted members of the family and lived in an atmosphere of affection and warmth. In the other kind of home, irritability, unpredictability, and rejection characterized parental attitudes toward the child. Parents can condition children at will. Their own attitudes and behaviors become incorporated into the make-up of the child. Objective, balanced, and stable parents bring up objective, balanced, and stable children. Prejudiced, unbalanced, and unstable adults repeat themselves similarly in their children.

We can diagram the balance and the imbalance that may be observed in adult personalities. One such representation appears in the accompanying drawing. You can see that in diagram A, the two selves (of which we all are made) appear in about equal degree and that the total personality is balanced and symmetrical. When the inner self predominates, as in diagram B, the personality is distorted in the direction of egocentricity. When the outer self has become overdeveloped, as in diagram C, the personality shifts toward so great an emphasis upon others that the person loses his own individuality. Either extreme is abnormal. Whether we become lost in ourselves or in others, to that extent we get seriously out of balance.

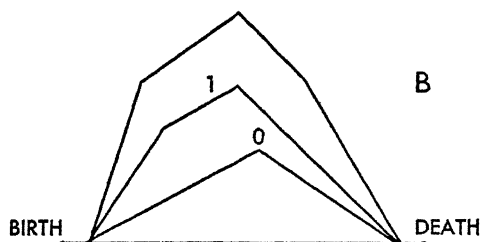
### **REALISTIC REQUISITES**

When we are well adjusted, we recognize that facts banish fear and we are willing to have ourselves psychologically assayed. Since we know that goals and ambitions must be considered in the light of our abilities, we are not afraid of "what the tests may show." If we hope for true success, we look for ways realistically to measure ourselves. In terms of the assets and liabilities such measurement affords, we can plan our lives. We know that our hopes for the future can be realized only when our abilities are in line with our desires. When

TOTAL PERSONALITY



TOTAL PERSONALITY



TOTAL PERSONALITY

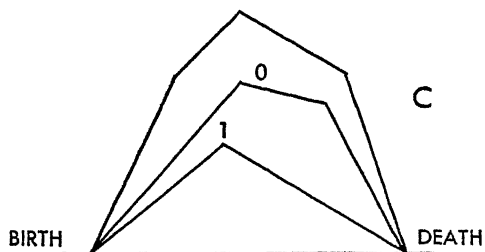


FIGURE 11. Schematic Presentations of Personality. Diagram A shows balance between the Inner Self (I) and the Outer Self (O) in a healthy person. Diagram B shows imbalance between Inner and Outer Selves of ego-inhibited, "You shall have," "You must" person.

thorough examination indicates that they are not, we must look about for something we *can* do that may bring reasonable satisfaction to us. At least, we *do something* positive instead of wasting our energies in vain wish, regret, and resentment.

A great deal of the unhappiness that attends the "frustrated career" can be avoided by competent guidance early in our educational lives. Unfortunately, it is quite common for a college student to discover for the first time in his life that he does not "have what it takes" to fulfill the plans, both personal and parental, that have been laid out for him. These tragedies of young adult life can be greatly reduced by adequate educational and vocational guidance in the earlier school years. It is tragically unrealistic of us to live in the make-believe world of "you can if you will" when we have proven ways for measuring the extent to which a person meets the known demands of a particular vocation. In general, we succeed only in those occupational areas for which we possess the abilities and interests that we know are necessary for them. Such abilities and interests are measurable. It is only the lethargy and apathy of the adult that prevents their application at the time when they may and can be most effective—early in life. Because we fail to make effective guidance available earlier, most persons are approaching their majority before they discover that ability is a requisite for success. You see, we spend our early lives under the delusion that if we *want* to do a thing badly enough, we can do it. It is a fact that no one, without *much better than average intelligence*, can obtain a Bachelor of Engineering Science degree from any reputable college, try though he may!

This carries consequences. If we accept the need for objective analysis as an aspect of good adjustment, we must make such analysis available. We must also be willing to accept the responsibility that attends it. If we agree that such measurement is desirable, we must be able to take the results of it. We must somehow be understanding when we discover that *our* child may succeed in the trades but can never make the grade in the professions. A tail goes with every hide.

In any case, whatever the potential of the well-adjusted

person may be, he *applies* his intelligence to the problems of life. If we are to be well adjusted, we must keep our new brain active and dominant in our rounds of daily affairs and in our dealings with others. We are able to profit from failure because we can realize that there is nothing stupid about error as such, that stupidity lies only in the error's continuous repetition. We therefore learn from our mistakes and go on, in all probability, to make others although we try hard not to make the same one twice.

The healthy person *plans* his future. In this planning he brings intelligence and thinking to bear. Many of us believe that we are thinking and planning when actually we are only worrying. Worry is a sly form of self-pity and when we worry, we always feel very sorry for ourselves. We disguise this by centering our worry about thoughts of others or of external events but boiled right down, it is only ourselves that concerns.

To plan, and to be sure that we are not merely worrying, we must think calmly and consider problems one at a time rather than trying to solve all of them at once. If problems appear to be multiple, we sort them out in order of their importance and take the hottest one first. In any case, we always try to solve one before we attempt the next. When we try to do everything at once, we but so spread our effort that nothing gets really accomplished. Many an "insolvable problem" remains so because we fail to sort out individual trees and get so concerned about the immensity of the forest. In any effort, we must be very careful to distinguish between *answers* and *solutions*. The first often are apparent but only the second are real.

In our examination of the problem, we also are careful to consider all possible outcomes, both good and bad. When we find ourselves concentrating upon the bad possibilities, we have excellent evidence that we are not thinking but that our worrying is of a high order. We keep in mind that no human can cover *all* possibilities and that no plan by man ever will be perfect. Consequently, we look for the best bets, we calculate the best probabilities that our judgment permits, and move ahead. We recognize this principle and operate upon it:

"There is no plan without venture and no gain without risk."

Having studied our problem, worked out a plan of attack, and decided to act upon it, we must face another issue. This one involves the fact that there can be no decision without consequence. This we accept. *We* have made the decision and *we* are willing to accept full responsibility for it. Handled in this manner, the problem is given full treatment by our new brain, we know that we have given our best to it, and we live with whatever results may come. We accept the statement: "Knowledge and action make the best antidote for worry," and we are reasonably content in the conviction that we *did* something—something positive and constructive.

### **REALISTIC PHILOSOPHY**

Good adjustment also recognizes that nothing is so good that it cannot be improved nor yet anything so bad that it cannot be changed for the better. The healthy skepticism inherent in this knowledge leads to a sane and realistic *philosophy of life*. With such a philosophy, we recognize that our world is neither the best possible nor is it the worst that could be. Within the range of our own individuality, we try to improve the desirable and do what we can to decrease the undesirable. We also recognize that when we can do nothing to change a condition, we always can change ourselves. We can, you know, change our attitudes but usually we are too lazy to try. We apparently would rather fulminate and fume. Yet, all of us would agree that man is stupid when he bangs his head repeatedly against a brick wall. Have you looked about yourself lately?

When we say that we cannot change, we really mean that we do not intend to try. We admit that we like ourselves as we are and imply strongly that all others are out of step. We are as unrealistic as have been all others who have said: "It can't be done!" Yet always, someone comes along and *does* it. Remember Disney's production, "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs?" When Snow White first met Dopey, she asked: "What's the matter, can't he talk?" Grumpy replied: "He

don't know; he never tried!" To this we must add that oftentimes we fail to try because we are so fearful of what might happen should our "plan" go wrong. We then are so hampered by worry that we are quite unable to think.

Any realistic philosophy of life incorporates the "other fellow." When our life adjustment is adequate, we recognize that we are an integral part of our society and that we have responsibilities to it. We know that we must observe its customs. This is the price we must pay for the protection it gives to us. We meet the interest on our debt by actively contributing in thought and energy to our culture. We try to be a living asset rather than an apathetic liability. We keep ourselves sensitive to the need for individual action if the world we leave is to be a bit the better for our having been in it. We accept the fact that our personal impact will be tiny, and probably unrecognized, but we face our duty and in our hearts can remain the comforting feeling that we did what we could.

In any case, we know that whatever our lives may be, in large measure they are what we have made them. We have a dual responsibility, one to our fellow men and one to ourselves. We realize that our own selves become meaningful only in terms of the reactions others make to us. We know that our individual welfare inextricably is bound with that of the rest of mankind. Viewed in this perspective, things like color, race, and creed become very small indeed.

### **SOCIAL OUTLOOK**

As a result of this social outlook, the healthy person is able to see himself in perspective. Put another way, he can see himself through the eyes of others. When we can do this, and do it honestly, we have truly grown up. We then can see that our estimate of ourselves is no greater than our evaluation of others—or theirs of us. Such an attitude permits us to laugh at ourselves when our own behavior has led us into a basically ludicrous situation. Our own hearty laughter but adds to the joke on us. All of us have a well-developed sense of the comic (we laugh at jokes on others) but only when we are well ad-

justed do we have a sense of *humor* (we laugh at jokes on ourselves). It will not surprise you, therefore, to discover that 90 percent of all people feel themselves possessed of a better than average sense of humor. The same percentage also believes that they have better than average insight into themselves. Would it shock you also to discover that the person most liable to overestimate the presence of desirable traits in himself is the person who actually is most deficient in these traits?<sup>4</sup>

Because of his close identification with others and his accurate estimation of himself, the world outlook of the well-adjusted person is congenial and optimistic. When we are one such, we see the world as a friendly place composed of kind and pleasant people. Because we are objective, we do not blind ourselves to the facts of human pettiness and deceit. We do, however, refuse to let this knowledge color our own regard for things as they are. We find comfort in the fact that when man universally puts his new brain actively to work, most human suffering in all its forms largely will cease. We recognize that the greatest single barrier to our ultimate control of ourselves lies in our traditional insistence upon *feeling* and *wishing* our way through life. We accept man as fundamentally good and potentially desirable. This attitude perhaps best was reflected by Will Rogers' statement: "I've never met a man I didn't like!"

### THE POORLY ADJUSTED

In contrast to this attitude of tolerance and understanding is that of the poorly adjusted person. Such a one sees a life pattern highly colored by the evil, the sinister, and the selfishness that undeniably exists about all of us. Life is a process of continuous discriminations, of continual judgments, and all of us should know that our judgment is likely to be a reflection of our *attitude* toward whatever is being judged. Consequently, we who are busily engaged in finding outlets for our individual

<sup>4</sup> G. Allport, *Personality: A Psychological Interpretation*, New York, Holt, 1937, pp. 220 ff.



ego needs, cannot help but feel that all mankind likewise searches for self-expression at the expense of his fellows. It is an old-brain law that we tend to see in others what we feel within ourselves. A world view distorted by the "I-ness" of the old brain leads us to regard life as a jungle where success goes to the quick but not to the reflective.

### **LIFE ATTITUDES VARY**

A measure of how much a person's feelings color his view of life may be obtained by examining his "expressive" behavior. There is much reason to believe that everything a person does, says, or writes carries the hallmark of his inner life. When people are asked to write brief autobiographies or to describe their philosophies of life, the reading of such productions permits an examination of the world as it is viewed through the eyes of the writer. Two illustrations follow. Deliberately, these have been selected to show two opposing points of view. They indicate how life attitudes vary as a function of our characteristic feeling tone.

I guess I'm afraid of life. I don't want to be, but when I think of all the terrible things that happen to people, I get sort of paralyzed. I know that I don't appear as good as I should because I would rather not say anything than to say something that was wrong. When questions are asked in class, I often feel that I know the answers and that I could give them before anyone else does but I'm never quite sure. Nine times out of ten, I would have been right and then I sit there just furious with myself. But this does me no good because the next time I think I know I'm just as frightened that I may be wrong as I was before. How does one get to feel sure of herself? . . . and another thing that makes life just miserable is that everyone is sex-crazy. Why can't people be human beings instead of animals? All boys seem to think about is what they can get out of a girl. I don't know why things couldn't have been arranged differently. . . . Why is it that I feel inferior to everyone else? People tell me that I'm attractive, I spend enough money, heaven knows, on my clothes, I know what fork to use when, but somehow I find myself always looking to see if my friends approve of me and when I see they don't I'm crushed. Is this normal?

. . . But personally, I think that people are all right if you give them a chance to be. The trouble is that so many go around expecting to be "taken" that it would be surprising only they were not. . . . I don't see why people are afraid of life. Life is fun and all seasons can be Spring if you let them be. Sure, most people are interested in themselves, that's just human nature, but they will also be interested in you if they think that you are interested in them. As I said, all people need is a chance to be friendly and they will be, but it's up to you to give them the chance. . . . There is so much to enjoy in life—learning things, studying people, finding the "right man," getting married, having children, and watching yourself grow up all over again. . . . It's hard to see why people are afraid of life just because it can be rough—sure it is, but anything worth while is hard to get anyway, life is really friendly, pleasant and fun. . . . I guess I don't have much patience with people who whine and complain all the time. Life is too short to fill it with unhappiness.

An examination of the amount of self-reference in the two selections gives interesting side lights. In the first case, almost every reference is ego-centered. In the second, the emphasis is upon the relations between the self and other people. This difference between "I-reference" and "You and I-reference" is characteristic of poor and of good adjustment respectively.

Understanding of a person's attitude toward life in general also may be obtained through the use of "projective" devices. In these, a person is asked to describe what he sees in actually vague and ambiguous situations. Since the situations themselves portray nothing specifically (ink blots, cloud pictures, and such), what is "seen" in them can only be what the person himself "projects" into them. One common device makes use of a standardized series of ink blots, some black and white, others in color. The things we humans read into these blots often is most revealing of our inner lives. Again, we illustrate with two contrasting series of responses.

1. Two ladies playing patty cake, they're smiling.
2. Two men in formal dress bowing to one another, each seeking to carry the load himself.
3. Two polar bears climbing over multicolored ice—it's pretty.
4. An underwater scene with all sorts of colorful marine creatures swimming about.

1. Smoke swirling over a mutilated body—it's all bloody.
2. This is an x-ray. The dark parts are infected areas with blood splashed all over.
3. Two rats climbing over a mass of putrefied flesh.
4. Like abstract symbolism. "Things" are gathering for some evil purpose.

The four responses in each case were made to the same ink blots. Is it not obvious that there must be strong differences in the typical way each of these people regard life? Such differences indeed there were. One individual is cheerful and outgoing while the other is cynical and withdrawn. Our attitudes are expressed in *all* of our behaviors. We can see, if we but look, how our attitudes and expectations in life determine our outlook upon it and hence our behavior within it. Our "life" largely is conditioned by whatever feeling tone is dominant within us. When we are well adjusted, this feeling tone tends to remain on the *pleasant* side.

### INTEGRATION

Good adjustment also implies that we feel a part of people rather than apart from them. This feeling of kinship we call *integration*. We speak of an integrated or a complete person when life motives and goals reasonably are in line with basic abilities. When this alignment exists, we can attain what we want. We recognize that, as an individual, we must adapt ourselves to the world of reality and we do not waste our energy in futile wishing that "things were different." The front we present to life is a united one because our personal desires are kept compatible with socially acceptable standards. Therefore, we are not internally torn by conflict between what we want and what our abilities, our drives, and our aptitudes permit us to obtain. Our conscience is then a socially determined thing and there is close agreement between what we "want" to do and what we "ought" to do. Since our personal ideals and the ideals of our society are in close agreement, we feel an integral part of mankind in general. We call such a person *mature*, principally because he has resolved the conflict be-

tween old-brain and new-brain processes. He has become a genuinely *socialized* human being.

### CONSISTENCY

An outgrowth of this integration is *consistency*. When we are relatively free from internal conflict and our own goals are in line with those of our culture, we behave in a consistent way. Our behavior then is guided by long-term reason rather than short-term emotion. We still give reasonably free play to our emotions but we are not controlled by them. We recognize that an emotionless person is as much out of line as is a chronically emotional one. What happens is that our emotion now is a function of the objective situation rather than an expression of individual feeling. Of course we are joyful or sad, we admire or we dislike, we hope and we fear, *but* our feelings are determined by the real situation itself and not by an emotionalized attitude. Our emotions are under control and their exaggerated expression simply cannot occur.

Consistency in behavior is a highly important aspect of good adjustment. It has been said that inconsistencies in behavior indicate the presence of internal conflict just as definitely as a rise in body temperature indicates physical disturbance.<sup>5</sup> Internal conflict is incompatible with adequate adjustment and not until such conflict has been resolved may consistent and hence normal behavior be shown.

A department head has an ego ideal of himself as the most progressive of liberals. He feels so strongly that all individuals, regardless of their position or responsibilities, should have equal voice in the determination of their organization's policy, that any suggestion to the contrary will arouse an instant and often highly emotional response. Yet this same person holds his departmental subordinates under a thumb both broad and firm. He selects the texts they shall use, tells them how and when to quiz and, under the guise of asking for suggestions, lets them know precisely how they are to conduct their classes. It is not uncommon for one of his assistants, having made a recreational appointment with others of his age group, to call late

<sup>5</sup> K. Horney, *Our Inner Conflicts*, New York, Norton, 1945, p. 35.

in the day breaking the engagement because his superior has asked him to do something else. It is literally true that the assistant would not "dare" to plead a previous date.

There is a vice-president in charge of engineering who fancies himself as a top-flight administrator. He talks and talks about "my boys" and is more than willing to explain how thoroughly he delegates and how much autonomy his department heads possess. He appears convinced that his area is excellently administered and that his people are happy and content. Actually he is a dictator, however benevolent the disguise. (He should hear some of "my boys" with their hair down!) He sees nothing strange in the fact that his desk is piled high with work demanding his signature when he returns from a trip nor nothing unusual that his department heads should answer requests for engineering decisions in his absence with: "That will have to wait until X gets back."

While the ability to socialize individual goals indicates the presence of the quality, we ought nevertheless to mention that the behavior of the well-adjusted person is *adaptable*. This must be so because environmental demands change constantly. If then, we are to meet them easily, we also must be able to change with them. We must be able to "roll with the punch." Oftentimes the big difference between normal and abnormal behavior lies precisely in this adaptability. The normal person is flexible, the abnormal person is rigid.

Normally, therefore, we alter our behavior to new facts and new ideas as they arise. We are fully aware that life itself continuously is in process of modification; that growth always involves change. We also are aware that good things endure and that those things that are culturally right and proper must be protected. So, while we are flexible and elastic when the situation demands, we also can stand firmly when harebrained flights into emotional fancy are suggested. We always are willing to be taught, but we will not blindly be driven!

### **JUDGMENT**

This being flexible or firm, depending upon the situation, brings a question. How are we to tell whether this one is a

flexibility or a firmness condition? The answer to this naturally lies in what we call *judgment*. This much used and equally abused term implies that we are able to appreciate a situation in accordance with its objective demands as they are related to our own internal feelings. We then can compare the various alternative solutions that are presented in terms of their relative worths and therefore evaluate them. This evaluation is made by holding each tentative solution up against whatever series of standards apply, whether these be standards of right, beauty, or economic values. Notice that underlying this whole process are the activities we have ascribed to the new brain. The old-brain functions of emotion, desire, wish, and feeling in general have little place. When we *think*, we can but appreciate, compare, and evaluate, and we then meet the demands of judgment. Further, behavior based on judgment will also keep us out of trouble.

In this connection, it is interesting to look at a series of "rules" for good behavior taken from the Organization Guide of a highly successful company:

#### RESPONSIBILITIES COMMON TO ALL MEMBERS OF MANAGEMENT

1. Live up to a high code of personal honor; follow the Golden Rule and obey the law.
2. Understand and follow sound principles of organization.
3. Fill all positions with the best qualified personnel, make promotions from within the organization whenever practicable, and maintain a sound replacement program.
4. Make plans for the discharge of his responsibility.
5. Keep himself informed on all overall corporate policies and on such specific policies as affect his particular responsibilities.
6. Offer suggestions and criticisms for consideration by the Central Policy Group.
7. Keep himself abreast of developments relating to his particular responsibility by following a personal program for study and observation of activities of others.
8. Establish a two-way communications system by which he keeps his organization fully and promptly informed on all matters of specific or general interest and by which his organization keeps him informed on all such matters.

9. Constantly inspect and appraise the activities and results of himself and his organization.
10. Know by personal contact the morale, the problems, and the achievements of all members of his organization.
11. Maintain an annual calendar and follow-up system to make certain no duties are overlooked.
12. Conduct sound human relations both inside and outside the company.
13. Follow common sense. Recognize when and where exceptions to rules should be made.

Notice that in all of these precepts, judgment is called for. This is especially true for Rule 13. This rule also includes a perhaps unwitting definition of "common sense." This kind of judged behavior does indeed call for knowing *when* exceptions should be made. However, if we keep our new brain in reasonable control and consequently think things over instead of merely feeling about them, we have a much, much better chance to apply common sense than will otherwise be the case.

If we wish to keep our judgment and its inherent common sense high in our way of life, we must recognize that specific rules for the guidance of human behavior are rare things. Notice that each of the "rules" for sound management are but general propositions that describe a goal but offer relatively little about how to reach it. So it is with our own rules of conduct. How well we follow them, largely is a result of the judgment we bring to bear. How effective our judgment may be is a function of how carefully we think and this ability is a consequence of how able we are in maintaining new-brain control.

Above and beyond the willingness to think and thus to bring judgment into play lies the willingness to accept full *responsibility* for decisions reached. The well-adjusted person does this. He recognizes that *his* life is largely what *he* makes it. Consequently, he not only tries to have his decisions be as realistic as possible, he also accepts them as his own and he lives with their results. Basic to this is the full realization that the world

owes him a living only in so far as he earns one. He develops self-reliance and self-assurance. He feels competent to cope with life situations as they emerge; he faces life gladly. He maintains a decided-upon-course of action despite pressures to desist so long as his *judgment* tells him the course is right. He can reach a decision without near-endless vacillation and without complete reliance upon advice from others. He accepts such advice but he scrutinizes it under the light his own judgment sheds. He is able to sacrifice immediate satisfactions for a greater future gain even though temporary hardship befall him. He is able to wait while a planned course of action works out.

Good adjustment implies both self-reliance and self-confidence. However, it most certainly does not imply complete self-sufficiency. The healthy person is capable of accepting the offers of friendship and love that others make to him without any feeling that such gestures threaten his integrity. He knows that the accepting of such offers fulfills normal social relations and in no way indicates weakness on his part. He is capable, without fear, both of loving and of being loved.

The well-adjusted person therefore is *sociable*. He experiences and enjoys a shared existence. He knows that he has little real value except in terms of his social worth. He enjoys and tries to understand people. He makes the happiness and sorrow of the other fellow oftentimes his own. He works easily with others and he works well. In doing so, he establishes enduring friendships because it is so apparent that he is more interested in the person himself than in what advantage the friendship may bring him. In general, he likes people and people like him. We can say quite emphatically that the well-accepted person is the well-adjusted one.

### **COURAGE**

The psychologically healthy person is *courageous*. He is fully aware that courage in life is not limited to the "heroic" action. Rather, he knows that courage is expressed in a multitude of little things—courage to express a conviction when he is



certain that the "powers that be" will object, courage to follow through on a course of action, courage to stand for the right when the wrong prevails, courage to face threat and to overcome it, courage to meet life on a realistic instead of a wishful plane, courage to take a "harder" way. In fact, courage is everywhere. It takes a certain amount to get out of bed in the morning and greet the new day.

Courage, therefore, is not an abstract ideal, nor yet something to be reserved for situations of stress, courage is a *way of life*; a way of life that the well-adjusted person is able to follow. It is a kind of habit that permits us to take action when the taking of action is necessary. It is a practical and workable reaction to the demands of everyday living and is quite unconsciously applied by the normal personality. Seldom do we say to ourselves; "Now I must be courageous," when we are faced with a need for decision. Instead, we analyze the problem, survey various solutions against the best probabilities that exist, decide upon a course of action, and follow through upon it. We also realize that at times it is better to run than to fight and our *judgment* tells us which kind of a time this one is. We act accordingly. However, we know that most problems must be faced squarely and dealt with adequately if our life is to be happy and full.

### **SOUND ADJUSTMENT**

We already have pointed out that rules for conduct mostly are general orientations toward a desired goal and seldom precisely spell out ways of getting there. We find this concept of "generality" in life applying to our "normal" person. Ideally, the normal individual does integrate new experiences into himself in such a way that a minimum of conflict results. However, it would be most unusual to find a person who did this with the consistency and effectiveness that is expressive of the ideal. Consequently, the "normal," "well-adjusted," and "healthy" human that we have been discussing actually is a hypothetical person; a goal or ideal to be worked for. It is a certainty that no single person lives to whom each of these at-

tributes of good adjustment could be ascribed in equal degree. Even if such a model were to exist, we might very well suspect that he would be a dull fellow. After all, it is the little inconsistencies, the minor idiosyncrasies, and the tiny emotionalizings that give life sparkle and zest. The characteristics of healthy adjustment we have described must be considered as goals to strive for rather than mandates that must be obeyed. We should recognize that we approach sound adjustment to the extent that we approximate these goals. None of us may reasonably hope to arrive at them full panoplied in the armor of adjustment, but we all can try to do a better job of regulating our lives. We are aware of the problem, we have our various paths to solution defined, we now have only to *work* toward being more effective folks. Just for the record, however, let us list the attributes of normal adjustment along with their abnormal counterparts.

NORMAL	ABNORMAL
Balanced living	Unbalanced living
Stability of character	Instability of character
Willingness to be assayed	Unwillingness to be assayed
Applies intelligence	Applies emotion
Plans future	Worries about future
Realistic philosophy of life	Wishful philosophy of life
Recognizes social obligation	Recognizes only personal obligation
Optimistic and cheerful	Pessimistic and gloomy
Integrated and whole	A congeries of parts
Sees the humorous in self	Sees the comic in others
Consistent	Inconsistent
Adaptable and plastic	Unadaptable and rigid
Sociable, "you-oriented"	Unsociable, "I-oriented"
Assumes responsibility for himself	Refuses to assume such responsibility
Self-reliant	Relies on others
Courageous	Fearful

This list hardly exhausts the possible terms through which normal and abnormal behavior might be distinguished but it does include the salient factors. It should, therefore, give you

some understanding of the basic differences between healthy and unhealthy behavior. It should help you to recognize emotional problems as they confront you and to keep in mind *as a goal* what a healthy reaction should be in this situation. At best, such listings can but be signposts for *you* along *your* way of life.

You will find as you read this list that all of it, both normal and abnormal, apply to you from time to time. This, you should expect. Remember that we said that normal and abnormal vary in degree only, that each of us carries about potentiality for either normal or abnormal behavior. Furthermore, each pair of attributes on the list mark extremes of behavior *between* which all of us live. Sometimes, we are more to one side and sometimes more to the other. Life is a continuous balancing process, we continually approximate and correct our behavior, we try, we adjust, and we try again. We should, of course, try to remain on the "normal" side of life issues; we should try to do the things that characterize healthy living.

### **EARLY LIFE EXPERIENCES**

To a great extent, we will find ourselves nearer the normal or nearer the abnormal end of the scale, dependent upon our early life experiences. As example, if our parents tended to share experience and possession with their fellow men, we will find ourselves nearer to the "sociable" end of that scale. If our parents tended to dodge and to evade issues, we now probably find ourselves among those who dislike to accept responsibility for personal actions. So it goes. The adult lives within either the shadow or the illumination his childhood development has cast.

Keep well in mind that the characteristics we have described as normal (or abnormal) essentially are *social skills*. It follows therefore that just as any skill (walking, talking, reading, and others) is developed, these social skills have been *learned*. They seldom appear as given, full blown without labor. They are the result of effort and practice, just as the ability to

drive a car is learned through effort and practice. It is really only when we are afraid to try that we do not learn. There is hope here. If we are what we have learned to be, and we now do not like what we are, then we must set ourselves to the task of unlearning, and then of relearning in better ways. This admittedly involves hard, laborious work, but only fear and slothfulness can keep us from the attempt. No matter what the present state of affairs in your behavior may be, you can change things *if you want to*. An optimistic and persistent attack will pay rich dividends in happiness and peace of mind.

Let us repeat, the adult personality is largely the result of early training and experience. In any case, the question is not so much what we have as it is how effectively we utilize it. Our behavior patterns endlessly are modified by our experiences and we can, when we so decide, direct this modifying along socially desirable lines.

In the light of what man has been and is in the process of becoming, it is nonsense to hold that "human nature cannot be changed." Whether we like it or not, the facts are that human nature constantly is changing and always has done so. Biologically, Cro-Magnon and modern man are the same. It will therefore appear that all of us, at birth, are potentially a "savage" or a "civilized" person, depending upon the cultural circumstances into which we are born. Think this over—it makes a mighty lot of sense and, when incorporated into our life perspective, it helps to make a lot of otherwise bewildering things clearer.

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## 6. THE ROAD TO NEUROSIS

Must helpless man, in ignorance  
sedate  
Roll darkling down the torrent  
of his fate?  
—Samuel Johnson,  
*Variety of Human Wishes*

**Y**OU WILL RECALL OUR DISCUSSION OF THE BODILY upsets caused by chronic emotional upheaval. You also may remember our description of the aspects of good adjustment that showed how mental health and happiness emerge from an open and unafraid facing of life. Suppose now we look at some of the pitfalls that lurk along the way of *poor* adjustment; the snares that may await when we try to solve problems through avoidance, evasion, and retreat.

Remember, if you will, that abnormal behavior is really an exaggeration of otherwise healthy actions; that the abnormal person behaves in the same way as does the normal one, only *more so*. We shall see that while each of us at one time or another may behave in an abnormal manner, we do not behave this way all of the time nor do we show such behavior in any extreme form. When we are healthy, our behavior tends to be stable. We weigh and balance our actions against the objective dictates of the situation. Our behavior is not *emotionally driven* and consequently out of line with the life situation itself. We have varied ways of responding and in each situation we select that response that seems most appropriate. We do not try to handle all situations with one single kind of behavior. Therefore we are flexible and what we do gets us, in some measure, what we want in ways that do not infringe upon the rights of others. We do not put all of our faith in any one behavior pattern and thus run the risk of strong disturbance should our *one*

way fail. When a person tries to solve life's problems in one fixed fashion and his behavior does not work, he is lost indeed. Nothing remains for him; his last (and only) line of defense has been broken.

The danger in the "mode of single solution" must be clearly stated. It is only reasonable that when we stake everything upon one way of behaving, we severely reduce the areas within which we can live successfully. Generally speaking, a particular way of behaving is effective only under one set of circumstances. There is no *one* road to good adjustment. However, there *is* a broad freeway to neurosis; the way of the single solution.

We must emphasize that the life plan of the well-adjusted person is not one of the preservation of things as they are. Normal living is directed toward activity and change. Self-preservation is not the most important law of life; the most important law of life is *growth*. Of course, "growth" with its implication of adjustment and continuing development becomes the best guarantor of preservation itself.

The freeway to neurosis is one of three-lane construction. These lanes are marked:

1. Sympathy
2. Antipathy
3. Apathy

Here is how we know. Studies of the personality development of children show that youngsters rather typically pass through three stages. First, they show a submissive dependence upon adults (Sympathy), second, they show negativism toward adults (Antipathy), and, third, they show outer compliance to adults but possess a private inner life that may be quite different (Apathy). The first stage usually appears during the first two years of life. The second crops out during the next two while the third appears variously during the next seven years.<sup>1</sup>

If, for some reason, a person's behavior patterns should be-

<sup>1</sup> G. Murphy, L. Murphy, and T. Newcombe, *Experimental Social Psychology*, rev. ed., New York, Harper, 1937, p. 505.

come fixated at any one of these levels, a way of responding becomes characteristic of him. If behavior becomes fixated at the first level, a dependent search for sympathy would characterize the person's reactions to others. If fixation occurs at the second level, the person shows an aggressive search for antipathy throughout later life. If the third level be fixated, the person's way of life is best described as a detached search for apathy. It is quite possible that any one of these three generalized ways of responding may be seized upon as *the* way of behaving. The person then attempts to meet all issues with a single technique and travels in fear, anger, or indifference down his life road.

That such fixation may occur is indicated by studies of neurotic and delinquent populations. Within these, three distinct ways of behaving have appeared: moving toward people (sympathy), moving against people (antipathy), and moving away from people (apathy).<sup>2</sup> These three great patterns of behavior seem to be the popular ones that, for one reason or another, we humans develop when things go wrong. We then lose our original plasticity and rigidly attempt to answer all of life's questions with one response. This dependence upon a one-way approach to all interpersonal relations routinizes and stratifies us. We then see *all* life situations from one viewpoint. When this happens to us, we try to solve all of our human problems through an appeal for help from others, through a ruthless attack upon others, or through indifference toward others. These three factors, helplessness, hostility, and isolation make up the core of the neurotic pattern. One of them usually is *overemphasized* in the behavior of the maladjusted individual.

If we seek personal salvation through rather complete dependence upon others, aggressiveness or detachment will be inconceivable to us. Likewise, if we believe that personal security is found only in aggressive attack, it will never occur to us that some problems might be handled by surrender or re-

<sup>2</sup> K. Horney, *Our Inner Conflicts*, New York, Norton, 1945; L. Hewitt, and R. Jenkins, *Fundamental Patterns of Maladjustment: The Dynamics of their Origin*, Springfield, State of Illinois, 1946.



treat. If we are convinced that a detached self-sufficiency is the only answer, we just never will think about active attack or equally active surrender because both of the latter would bring us into a *contact* we are striving to avoid. We therefore fight life's battle with just one grand strategy and the outcome always is the same—we lose.

The normal person sees nothing incompatible in any of these basic attitudes toward life. When our behavior involves manifold rather than single response, we know that some occasions demand the assistance of others. We also are aware that there will be times when the situation must be met by frontal attack. At yet another time, we realize that we should keep things to ourselves. Our behavior is *flexible*. We know that a distinct relationship exists between successful solution and varied approach.

While varied behavior enriches our lives, it also complicates it. In fact, variability of behavior presents a paradox. If it is true that we can attain mental health only by behaving differently in different situations, then stability is achieved through instability. This is a fact. If our life adjustment is to be effective, we must be sensitive to our surroundings and capable of changing with them. If you think a moment, you will realize that a *completely stable* organism would be a dead one. The rigidity of neurosis is in fact a kind of living death because the neurotic basically is insensitive to the general play of life factors about him. However, he is extremely sensitive to *one* aspect of it.

The big difference between normal and neurotic behavior lies in the difference between flexibility and rigidity. It is the difference between thinking and emotionalizing our way through life; the difference between new-brain and old-brain functions. Yet the two have much in common. Whether our life attitudes are characterized by flexibility or rigidity, each of us will view the world in terms of our personal outlook upon it.

The French equivalent of our FBI tells us: "The eye sees what it looks for but looks for only what is already in the mind." If we look upon the world as a place where security is

found only through reliance upon others, through a vigorous attack, or through retreat into ourselves, we behave accordingly. In general, we tend to behave in ways established by how we *feel* about things and we sometimes do not learn that our own feelings actually are quite unimportant, that it is what we *do* that counts. The philosopher Kant has told us: "We see things not as they are, but as we are."

Before we begin to talk about the kinds of difficulty the way of the single solution can make for us, let us again look at the meanings of some words. Confusion often exists between such terms as "neurosis," "psychoneurosis," and "psychosis." The first two essentially are different words for the same thing. They refer to behavior patterns that tend to make adjustment to other people difficult. The neurotic is a person whose behavior is so limited in breadth and so out of line with usual expectation that his relationships with others are disturbed. He gets along in the world of people but not very well. He is regarded as different by others and he, himself, often feels that he does not quite belong. The point is that the neurotic makes an adjustment to others sufficiently adequate for others to tolerate him. He is sort of "put up" with.

The psychotic person (the legal term is "insane") is one whose behavior is so far out of line with reality that we must protect ourselves from him and also protect him from himself. Commonly, this is done by placing him in a mental hospital. As between the normal and the neurotic, the chief difference between the neurotic and the psychotic is one of degree. The psychotic is more seriously incapacitated and more deeply disturbed than the neurotic, he is less flexible, and treatment is more difficult. The neurotic person still has a fair measure of contact with reality, the psychotic often is completely out of touch with it. The neurotic usually is more easily reached and hope for his recovery is greater.

Our discussion will center about the neurotic personality and the various guises in which it appears (the neuroses). We will have no more to say about the psychotic person as such. Remember, the neurotic person is one whose *maladjustments* prevent him from becoming a member in good standing within

his group. He does not fit with things as they are and it bothers him. The psychotic person may add two and two, obtain five, and be quite content. The neurotic adds two and two, comes up with four, and is very unhappy about it. In general the neurotic person experiences feelings of helplessness, hostility, and isolation. Usually, also, one of these feelings is expressed openly as *the* way of life. Let us see briefly how such feelings come about.

For several years after birth, the human infant is almost completely dependent upon his parents for his welfare. It is hardly surprising that out of this early dependence, attitudes basic to later outlook on life should develop. If early life is made up of serious frustrations, a child may grow up with deep-seated feelings of inability to cope with things. If a child is rather continuously humiliated by unthinking or unkind adults, he may develop an attitude of vicious aggressiveness toward other people and things. Of course, as he grows up he discovers that outright aggression makes trouble for him. He then may internalize the hostility, and the consequent self-blame can cause him to feel that he is somehow different from people in general. He then often seeks comfort in detachment and self-sufficiency. Early overdependence upon others commonly emerges from undue care and protection by one or both parents. While the precise direction that one of these basic maladjustments may take is unpredictable, we do know something about the underlying family relationships out of which these unfortunate attitudes develop.

We can describe the parental behavior likely to lead to unfortunate personality development under three major headings:

1. Overprotection of the child
2. Favoritism shown toward a brother or sister
3. Rejection of the child

### **OVERPROTECTION**

While it is quite true that father may overprotect a child, in our culture it is the mother who usually is the overprotective

one. Her typical picture begins with a basic attitude. This is best described as one of "living only for the child." She is strongly devoted to it and feels uncomfortable when separated from it, however briefly. Her husband is permitted small share in the child's upbringing and is prevented from exerting much influence. Throughout the life of the child, the father plays a minor role.

As the mother's care for the child develops, she spends an increasing amount of time with it until her own life fairly revolves about the youngster. She becomes decreasingly active in adult society and her husband becomes a kind of essential evil without which she would be unable to do the things for her child she feels is his due. She takes the child to school, calls there for him, and sees to it that he is subjected to no "undesirable influences." She is completely uncritical of her attitude and behavior toward the child and a lioness at bay if others criticize.

Excessive and undue maternal care is shown in four ways:

1. She maintains excessive contact with the child. "Mother" always is present.
2. She continues to treat him like a baby even though he is years past the infant stage.
3. She will not let him grow up and actively prevents the appearance of any independent behavior.
4. Characteristically, she has little actual control over the child. She submits to his wishes rather than attempting to modify his actions.<sup>3</sup>

When conditions such as these prevail in the home, the children involved develop two different kinds of behavior about equally often. Approximately half of overprotected youngsters become miniature despots whose every wish is law in the household. The remaining half show extremely submissive behavior. They are highly obedient to the mother and quite dependent upon her.

Thus, overprotected children develop generalized attitudes of hostility or dependence. One group becomes aggressive,

<sup>3</sup> D. Levy, *Maternal Overprotection*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1943.

domineering, and egocentric. The other group becomes shy, timid, and withdrawing. In either case, it is extremely difficult for the normal childhood friendships and interpersonal relations to develop. Adjustment to the world outside the home seriously is impaired. Once these patterns of maladjustment have become ingrained within the child, attempts to make him change but serve to intensify them (the vicious circle of maladjustment). It is obvious that very serious difficulties are in store for the youngster unfortunate enough to have been brought up in such highly sheltered atmospheres.

Two cases taken from Levy's *Maternal Overprotection* will serve as illustrations:

A boy of 16 was described as "impudent and defiant of authority." He had been bottle fed until he was three and a half, dressed, and bathed by the mother until he was six and even at age fourteen, the mother was assisting him in these functions. When he became of school age, the family moved into a home near the school so the mother could watch him as he came and went. Until he was fourteen, he refused to allow either parent to leave the house in the evening unless he went along. He now, at sixteen, refuses to go to school, stays up late at night and sleeps until late in the morning. Despite recommendation, his mother refuses to permit him to work (pp. 28-29).

A boy, age ten, was anxiously obedient to his mother. He accepted her domination without protest and her slightest sign of disapproval was highly effective in controlling him. He tried to do exactly as his mother wished and was overresponsive to her demands. He was breast fed for the first three years of his life and his mother slept with him until he was six. During these years, they lived alone with a minimum of social contacts. She prevented him from playing with other children until he was eight because of her fear of "roughness." She had also hired a "bodyguard" for the lad because he reported that other children molested him (p. 90).

### **FAVORITISM**

Favoritism shown toward one child breeds antagonism in the other children within the home. This is because it is im-

possible for the nonfavored child to live up to the glorified level of attainment enjoyed by the favored youngster. Favoritism often arises when a baby appears in the household. Parents tend to forget the older child in their interest in the newcomer. As children grow up, they lose the "cuteness" of infancy and occasionally, parents will overemphasize the appeal of the very young child. As an older youngster outgrows infantile cuteness, parents may turn to a younger one. The common outcome is that the "unfavored" child develops undesirable personality characteristics. The following case is illustrative.

A six-year-old boy was brought to a clinic by his parents, who complained that the child stole, lied, and was doing poorly in school. Investigation into the family situation indicated strong parental preferences for twin sisters. The twins, according to the parents' report, were neat and tidy about the house, obeyed well, and "were just perfect angels." The boy, on the contrary, stole money from the mother's purse, with which he bought toys and candy for his playmates. He was a deportment problem in school and had attempted to forge his parent's signature on an unfavorable report card. He was sullen and truculent about the house, noisy and disorderly in conduct. His parents said they had "tried everything" with him but this "everything" boiled down to comparison such as: "Why can't you be nice like your sisters?" and similar remarks made in conjunction with whippings, scoldings, and denial of privileges. Attempts to indicate that the boy's behavior was a result of the parents' attitude toward him met with incredulous disbelief.

### **REJECTION**

If parents want their child to develop deep feelings of insecurity, their best bet is to make him feel that he is not wanted. Rejection is most effective in building uncertainty. You will recognize this fact by examining your own life. When have you felt the most uncertain, the most insecure? At those times when you have felt, down deep, that you were being tolerated, that the group did not really like you, and that, somehow, you just didn't belong. The feeling of being unwanted is one of our most unfortunate life experiences.

Rejection of a child often develops out of a parental feeling that the youngster imposes an undue economic burden, out of resentment because a social life is impaired, or, more commonly, out of an unhappy marital situation. However it may originate, rejection shows itself in any one (or all) of three ways:

1. Dissatisfaction with the child
2. Severe treatment
3. Outright neglect

If you question any of these reactions to children, read your daily paper almost anytime. Or, better still, talk with a social worker.

It should be apparent that such attitudes toward a child arise out of actual resentment of him or, at least, a distinct lack of love for him. In either case, parental rejection usually results in aggressively hostile behavior in the child. Sometime, a fearful withdrawnness also may appear. Whatever the direction, the rejected child is a poor risk for adequate adjustment.

A father asked a psychologist to talk with his son. This seventeen-year-old boy had become quite a problem in the home. He was arrogant and impertinent with his stepmother and insisted upon living his "own life." This life of his, centering in the Theater Arts, was completely opposed to the rather staid culture of the home. Both adults (each enjoying a second marriage) were wealthy in their own rights. Investigation revealed that unusually high standards for childish behavior had characterized the youth's upbringing. Even when quite young, he had been expected to behave himself as would have an adult in the highly "socialized" strata in which the parents moved. Failure to comply brought punishment in the form of banishment from the family table and evening discussions. All sorts of punishments were contrived to bring the recalcitrant child to order. Of course, the gap between parents and child widened. When he was seen, a veritable state of siege existed between them. The father, protesting that "he had done his best to make a good home and to rear a 'cultured child,'" now said his limit of patience was reached. The psychologist was supposed to "fix it." Little fixing could be done. Hands were held and shoulders offered sympathetically on both sides. Within the year, the youth reached his eight-

eenth birthday and the Army beckoned. We should not be surprised that in the Army the youth apparently has found a "home" and seems to be making a sound adjustment. Now, even father is talking about offering financial help for the college years to come.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to predict the precise form maladjustment may take as a result of the unfortunate home conditions just described. However, it should be clear that overprotection, favoritism, and rejection are strong factors in the development of unhealthy behavior patterns. These behavior patterns have been shown to appear in three general types:

1. Hostility or tendencies to move against people (the search for antipathy)
2. Helplessness or tendencies to move toward people (the search for sympathy)
3. Isolation or tendencies to move away from people (the search for apathy)

These tendencies would seem to be basic trends toward neurosis. We shall classify the various neurotic behavior patterns under these three headings. However, you must keep in mind that often all three trends may be found in any one individual. As example, a person whose dominant behavior pattern is one of aggressive hostility, commonly will be found to be carrying about half-realized feelings of helplessness and isolation. These last two feelings only serve to augment his inner conflict because they are so opposed to his usual way of behaving (aggressive hostility). So, also, a person who seeks personal sanctuary in helpless dependence may show some evidences of hostility and isolation. In such a case as well, the basic incompatibility between the opposed outlooks serves only to intensify feelings of inadequacy. Similarly, a person, who uses withdrawal as a solution to life's problems, may possess feelings of hostility and helplessness that he may seek to resolve in a private dream world. Nevertheless, in each of these personal situations, one of the three general forms of neurotic response is dominant. It is on the basis of this common dominance by one neurotic trend that we shall make our classi-



fiction. If you are familiar with the various attempts to classify the neuroses, you will recognize that this one, also, largely is one of convenience.

### **THE SEARCH FOR SYMPATHY**

If we have spent any appreciable time alive, we should not be surprised that many attempts to adjust via the single solution should center about the search for sympathy. Our culture historically has emphasized the ideal of mutual support. We are urged to be fond of our neighbor and to feel as a brother toward him. It should be easy for us to understand how some of us may come to overemphasize a desire for dependence upon others. If a person is reared under either parental dominance or parental indulgence, he readily could come to believe that other people largely exist to provide refuge for him in times of personal stress.

Undue dependence upon others may grow out of oversolicitousness, but this fact does not tell the full story. We know that beyond the tendency for the mother to love her child, there exists a *need* in the child for this affection. We also know that when this affection is denied, the rejected child shows a veritable "hunger" for love. This hunger often leads him into extreme and unusual behaviors in his effort to obtain the affection he craves. It is reasonable to assume that to some degree a hunger for love exists in all children as a natural part of their make-up. Consequently, oversolicitousness plays directly into two basic human needs; the mother's desire for the affection of the child, and the need of the child for the love of the mother. Under these conditions, we can understand how these two needs mutually may support each other. When this is permitted to happen, it is easy to understand how the basic need for affection may grow all out of proportion to its actual role in life. When these two needs continuously complement each other, a child readily may greatly overestimate the value of sympathy in human affairs.

To this probability, let us add a fact. The young child commonly regards his parents as all-powerful beings on whom the

joys and comforts of life depend. This attitude also can become disproportionate. It is quite possible for the child to so over-value parental power that he comes to see himself as relatively helpless and therefore dependent upon outside support. When self-esteem is low, we look for assistance whatever the problem may be. We then must feel certain that what we do meets with the approval of whatever more powerful being is in charge of our destiny at the moment. When we are reared in a "come-to-mother" atmosphere, we will search for "mother substitutes" throughout our life. An early engendered feeling of dependency *spreads out* to include all authority. We then see such authority as existing primarily to aid and assist us whenever we feel need. Consequently, even the slightest rebuff by these "parent surrogates" will involve real threat to our very existence. It is the "reality" of this threat that makes it so difficult for the normally self-reliant person to understand the situation of the dependent one. If we are accustomed to making some real effort to handle our own problems *before* we ask for help, we do not understand the frustration of a person whom, in our opinion, has not yet tried. We see here a basic reason why understanding is essential to tolerance.

What happens to the dependent person is this. He has developed deep feelings of helplessness through unfortunate early experience. He therefore looks for and demands *unqualified* affection from others. When he fails to get it, he is lost. His overwhelming claims upon friendship later in life are but expressions of his continual search for an infinite mother love.

This kind of person feels that it is but his right to appeal for help upon any provocation. If assistance is not forthcoming, he feels humiliated and helpless. He constantly is dependent upon the active approval of others, if he is to feel at all an accepted member of his group. Any refusal to help, however slight, confuses him. Furthermore, because his *right* has been denied, he may experience some internal feelings of hostility. Such feelings he must suppress because his expectation of benevolence is quite incompatible with attitudes of aggression. As we know, such suppression in no way aids him. Rather, it but serves as a spur to drive him more into his effort to find sympathy and

support. The inner conflict induced drains his already low energy reserves. He may become literally exhausted through his search for sympathy in a world where practical emphasis is placed on self-support. Consequently, outside of the family situation, the dependent person constantly encounters what to him is rebuff and frustration. His world is not a happy one.

Now we know that frustration ordinarily leads to aggression and to anxiety. To the helpless personality, aggression is intolerable and must be denied. Thwarting therefore can but increase the burden of anxiety he already carries. The vicious circle of neurosis clearly is evident. The only way is through



Garell

Collier's

**"Oh thank you, Mr. Walker, I don't know what  
I'd do without you."**

FIGURE 12. From *Best Cartoons of The Year 1954*. Reproduced by permission of Crown Publishers, Inc.

dependency, he must have the active support of others, and isolation is unthought of. The dependent person, in contact with society-in-general, cannot escape anxiety. He is certain that the world belongs to the meek, and frustration, of course, is his daily lot. His efforts to rid himself of anxious feelings (through an increased search for sympathy) serve only to undermine such security as he may possess and to increase his generalized anxiety. This anxiety feeds upon itself. It grows by a process of frustration-accretion, until his ability to tolerate internal stress is overwhelmed, and breakdown occurs.

The neurotic forms in which the search for sympathy may express itself vary enormously. However, we can describe four major conditions:

1. Anxiety States
2. Fear States
3. Loss of Function States
4. Fatigue States

### **ANXIETY STATES**

We already know that anxiety is an unrealistic fear; a sort of anticipation of disaster; a premonition of direful things to come. Commonly, this sense of dread has no basis in reality and, in its early stages at least, usually is not an anticipation of any one event in particular. It is "free floating" and without actual attachments. Later in its course, as we shall see, the anxiety may become attached to a real event or thing. However, even when this has occurred, *factual* evidence for the feared plight will not be found, or if potentially present, will have little probability of occurrence.

We begin our discussion of the neuroses with what we shall call "anxiety states." There is reason to believe that all the forms of severe maladjustment originate with a frustrating situation that produces disturbing anxiety. In fact, credence may be given to the statement that: "All neuroses begin with an anxiety attack!"

Anxiety attacks are characterized by an intense feeling of

fear-in-general that is not usually attached to anything specific. As in any strong emotional experience, bodily sensations also are felt. There is a sort of muscular paralysis, cold perspiration, feelings of pressure in the head and chest, rapid heartbeat, difficulties in breathing, and similar conditions. (We recognize these as the usual physiological reactions to deep emotional experience.) However, the anxious person sees nothing "normal" in these feelings. After a few occurrences, it is not surprising that he should become convinced that he has a "bad heart," that something is wrong with his lungs, his digestive system, or his head. The generalized fear now can become attached to one or more of the bodily functions that change so drastically during emotional experience. Fastening on to one or more of these changes gives the tense person a "reason" for his dread. Once such fixation has occurred, he will start to search for the cause of his discomfort, and travels from physician to physician looking for medicinal cure. Since his symptoms arise out of a disturbed emotional life, he will obtain but transient relief. Cure in any real sense will escape him until he understands himself, accepts himself, and learns how *realistically* to deal with his fear.

All of us can appreciate the terror a person may live through during an anxiety attack. Most of us live in deep ignorance of bodily functions and are even less aware of psychosomatic relationships. Therefore an anxiety attack can be but evidence to us that something radically is wrong with our organic processes. Because it helps causally to ascribe vagueness to reality, we become convinced that something is wrong with our heart, our stomach, our brain, or whatever organ seems principally involved to us. There is something quite comprehensible in the fear invoked when our heart begins to race and pound when, often as not, we are sitting quietly and "not thinking about anything." Our error is of the cart and horse variety. We believe that we are fearful because our heart is "bad," when actually our heart symptoms are the result of a maladjusted emotional life.

At one time or another, all of us have experienced an anxiety attack of some degree. Most of us survived unscathed

principally because we did not become morbid about it. We did not fixate our attention upon some bodily organ and ascribe the whole problem to it. We went through the emotional experience, noted its occurrence, hoped it wouldn't happen again, and went on with our lives. Most of us are sound enough emotionally and our lives are effective enough so that the incident does not constantly recur. In any case, it is only when the anxiety feelings come to dominate a person's life so that his dealings with life situations become inadequate that we are justified in speaking of an "Anxiety State" as such. Only when our behavior begins to center so morbidly about our personal fears that our round of daily affairs becomes impossible to complete are we really *anxious*.

Once this spiraling of anxiety commences, it is unfortunately true that we get far along the road to neurosis before we see reason to ask for psychological help. It says little for man's basic rationality that he ordinarily visits his dentist twice yearly, sees his physician regularly, but requests assistance with his psychological life only when it has gotten quite out of hand. We are well aware that ills of tooth and body are preventable to large measure and that treatment in this physical world is highly effective when difficulties are unearthed early in their development. Unfortunately, we tend to regard our inner lives as distinctly *our own business* and to feel that *we* can handle *anything* that may be wrong with *us*. And so we can! *But*, we must be taught how to do so just as we are taught how to care for our teeth and our bodies. Psychological problems are so very *personal* that we all assume that since it is *us* who are involved, we can cope with it. Consequently, we usually fight a losing battle, until we are literally *driven* to ask for help. When we wait so long, we face a war of attrition with ourselves; a *war* that would have been but a skirmish had we moved earlier.

A. G., a twenty-six-year-old junior executive, complained of heart palpitations and strong feelings of impending doom. These sensations appeared primarily when he was in a crowded place such as

a theater, but had recently begun to occur during interdepartmental conferences. The attacks of anxiety had by now become so severe that when they occurred, he felt that if he did not get out of the present situation, he would die. Consequently, he had of late, often left a conference hastily and with no word of explanation. He would then walk around the plant until the attack subsided. He recognized that these feelings were interfering with his work and, since medical examination revealed only an unusually stable heart action, he came for psychological assistance. Investigation revealed strong unrecognized feelings of hostility toward his immediate superior, coupled with an attitude of complete acquiescence toward authority. He had led a highly sheltered life until after his high-school career and underwent a "nervous breakdown" during his freshman year in college, which was his first experience in "being on his own" away from home. Discussion in which he was given the opportunity of "venting" his feelings of hostility coupled with some explanation regarding the physiological aspects of emotion, as well as an understanding of his attitudes of dependency, served to enable him to cope with the attacks of anxiety and to decrease his fear of dying during one. Recently, the attacks have been occurring with decreasing frequency and he has begun to face some of the interpersonal relations involved in his job.

A. G.'s attacks began in situations where he was surrounded by people. Ultimately, they began to center about a business experience in which he faced the possibility of verbal disagreement with authority. This authority appeared in the guise of his superior, toward whom he felt both hostile and also dependent. The conflict that resulted between the basic incompatibility of these feelings precipitated an anxiety attack. The upset induced also diminished as soon as he could get away from the immediate situation. In its essence, this attack of anxiety said: "Look at me! I'm in terrible shape! I'm not even sure that I will live! Pity me! Don't place this responsibility on my shoulders! You are being most unfair!" A. G. was afraid of failure and its attendant threat to his adequacy. His anxiety attacks were intended to prevent the possibility of failure, but as is typical of neurotic symptoms, only guaranteed it. Reeducation coupled with the development of personal

insight enabled him to perceive his situation in a more realistic light and therefore to reduce the severity of his symptoms.

### FEAR STATES

A Fear State differs from an Anxiety State in that in the former there is an event, thing, or situation of which the person openly is afraid. While such "fear" actually may be as unrealistic as the less closely attached anxiety, nevertheless the person is afraid of *something*, something "real." Usually, but not always, this something centers about conditions that most of us commonly encounter. Such things as high places, death, illness, dirt, animals, closed places are common.

The commonality of these fear states is attested by the number of specific things feared that have been counted. Once upon a professional time, it was standard practice to itemize these fears or phobias and to give them fancy labels. Some 135 such phobias have been named. A few examples follow:

Acrophobia	Fear of high places
Algophobia	Fear of pain
Astraphobia	Fear of thunder and lightning
Necrophobia	Fear of dead bodies
Nyctophobia	Fear of darkness
Nosophobia	Fear of disease
Thanatophobia	Fear of death
Xenophobia	Fear of strangers
Zoöphobia	Fear of animals

While such terms make fascinating additions to our vocabularies, they in no way assist us in solving the problem, although most of us will feel quite relieved when we are told that we have this "osis" or that "itis." Furthermore, it is with some pride that we pass on the assigned Greek or Latin term to interested friends. Factually, however, naming in the absence of any causal description is a highly futile gesture.

We all will recognize that many of us share in a feeling of dread where most of these "fears" are concerned. However, despite a shudder or two when we see a snake, most of us continue on our way—with minor detours—and are not precipi-



tated into a blind and screaming retreat. We also may want a firm hand-hold before we peer over the brink of the Grand Canyon, but we do not refuse to use elevators nor yet insist that our hotel room be no higher than the third floor. All of us are a little fearful or phobic, but in general, we do not permit our fears to guide and direct our lives. Here again, we see that the normal and the neurotic behave in exactly the same way. The difference is in the *degree* of the behavior.

In reality, a phobia that the person takes seriously usually covers a more basic and widespread anxiety. Just as the anxious person seizes upon some physical symptom that "explains" his illness, so too a fear of a specific object becomes the "reason" why the person cannot behave adequately in his society. Yet both of them, the anxiety or the fear, are the results of inner turmoil rather than the cause for it.

Fear states quite definitely display the appeal for help from others that the afflicted person feels is his due. His attitude essentially is this: "I'm afraid to face this situation. Therefore, someone must help me." Consequently, he feels quite justified in making an open, and often dramatic, appeal for aid. If he fails to get it, he feels badly mistreated, unjustly refused, and most sorry for himself. All of these feelings simmer down to one of resentment that serves largely to refuel the vicious circle of neurosis we have already described.

Our fearful ones make a practice of solving problems by avoiding them. However, when the problem cannot be escaped, their convincing fear often serves to get them the help they crave. By this means, they are again successful in avoiding the problem by getting someone else to solve it for them. Furthermore, they fulfill their need to be dependent and conclude their search for sympathy in terror, or a close relative of it.

The secretary of an executive began to eat her lunch in her office. Her boss objected to this. He felt (and rightfully so) that the best of impressions were not created when the president's secretary had to "carry her lunch." This was particularly true, he insisted, because the company maintained an excellent cafeteria for its employees. (One suspects that the fact of a regular \$25,000 yearly loss in the

cafeteria's operation also was a motivating factor.) However, investigation disclosed that it was the noise of the factory (through part of which it was necessary to walk when going from office to cafeteria) that concerned her. As might be suspected, this fact appeared only after nearly endless other "reasons" had been presented.

The secretary lived with an older sister. Both parents were dead. Throughout the younger sister's life, the older one had served as counselor, confessor, and guide to proper behavior. Now, all was threatened. The older sister was seriously interested in an affable widower. Marriage seemed to loom. To the secretary, the threat of losing the protection of her older sister was not to be borne. Prior to her sister's marital interests, she had been able to withstand the factory noises because she somehow felt that sister wouldn't let anything happen. Now, with sister moving out of the picture, she could not face the threat alone. It is most interesting that her understanding of the real issue evoked a healthy: "I'll be damned!" She wasn't, but with less prompt attention, she might have been.

Although at a somewhat superficial level, this case illustrates one of the principal reasons for neurotic behavior. The person believes that the neurotic symptoms will help him to get what otherwise he could not obtain. In this sense, neurotic symptoms have *meaning* and *significance*. They assist the person in avoiding the issue and prevent him from facing the threatful fact that he is inadequate and incompetent.

When we lean on the quivering bolster of maladjustment, we are saved from a more serious blow to our self-esteem. Our own security feelings are protected because we are not forced to the realization that our behavior is ineffective, inefficient, and actually serves only to increase our basic difficulties. Our estimate of what is real is distorted; we are lost in a morass of sheerly personal feeling. Consequently, any effort to reëducate must be preceded by an approach designed to increase the ability to accept reality as it is. Attempts to "reason" with a maladjusted person offer the same hope of success that efforts to "reason" with a drunk accomplish. Both persons are operating at an old-brain level, where the *only* interest is in the "I." Only when the person can see both into his "I" *and* into reality, can hope for change endure. This perspective is attained only from the level of the new brain. So, the first step always

must be to bleed off the feeling content that blinds and distorts life perspective.

### **LOSS OF FUNCTION STATES (CONVERSION HYSTERIA)**

Loss of function states involves precisely what the term says. The function of some body part is lost, distorted, or impaired. Nearly any bodily organ may become involved. One person may be unable to see. Another may become deaf, while still another may be unable to feel pain in certain areas of his body. Others may lose the ability to move a limb, to speak above a whisper—or to speak at all. Still others may experience spasmodic movements of isolated muscles or sensations of pain in various parts of the body. Whatever symptom may be displayed, in each case, it is impossible to unearth any *organic* reason for the disturbance. Complete and thorough physical examination always fails to reveal anything that could be causing the difficulty.

In addition to the failure of physical examination to reveal organic disfunction, afflicted persons usually display an attitude of indifference toward the disturbance. A person who claims inability to see—who is psychologically blind—if he mentions the loss at all, may discuss it with surprising calmness. On the surface, he bears his cross with such fortitude that we marvel. Is he completely stupid? Or, are we witnessing an unusual display of courage? Puzzling questions for the person of normal adjustment! An hysteric who is so crippled that he is unable to walk or write may respond to the question: "How do you feel?" with the answer: "My teeth hurt!" This apparently courageous resignation to their plight is an outright appeal for sympathy.

These people openly demonstrate a strong need for attachment to and dependency upon others. They also feel a deep inability to meet the ordinary problems of life. They continue the attitudes of helplessness into adult life, that are normal only for the child. They never learn to accept the necessity for self-determination. They see no duty to society; no need to consider the other human in their sheerly personal equation.

Responsibility in any form frightens them and they move psychological mountains to avoid it. They crave close emotional attachment with others, particularly with others "in power." They search, with all the intenseness of old-brain activity, for a parent substitute who will protect them from the demands of reality.

This tremendous need for protective affection often results from parental overindulgence or rejection. Somehow, these people have been made to feel inadequate and incompetent. They are actually unable to meet life's problems unaided. Consequently, so long as they can find some other person who is willing to serve as a bulwark for them, they get along fairly well. They complain, they make constant demands for attention, but manage to carry out everyday duties with some effectiveness. Nevertheless, their apparent adjustment is apparent only. It is far from real and almost any rejection, any indication that they must face things alone, will be sufficient to push them into complete breakdown. It is characteristic of this type of the search for sympathy that they show an immediate loss of body function. This loss obviously makes them incapable of meeting the demands and serves to underline their need for help. Thus, their last line of defense becomes a merciless throwing of themselves upon the tolerance and sympathy of others. No personal discomfort is too great a price to pay *if* it gets them the support their infantile ego demands. In their thinking, there is no room for "you"; only the relentless demands of an insatiable "I."

B. R. was the son of parents whose occupation had kept them out of the country, except for brief visits, since shortly after his birth. He had been raised in a "home" which, while it provided physical comfort and some personal attention, could scarcely be expected completely to replace normal parent-child relationships. As a college senior, B. R. was a demanding, attention-getting, young person. His academic career had been characterized by vacillation from one area of specialty to another. Decision was forced upon him at the beginning of his senior year, inasmuch as each student had to select an area in which to "major." B. R.'s attitude throughout clearly was one of open expectation that his faculty advisor's sole

duty was to prepare his schedules and to assist him through the courses. Since the attitude of the advisor was to the effect that the student must make his own decisions, conflict was inevitable. B. R. continued through his last year, floundering about, trying this scheme and that to evade responsibility, until the time for his examinations approached. As his inadequacy in preparation became increasingly apparent to him, he rather suddenly developed a completely incapacitating and severe pain in his back. He was hospitalized, but when repeated examination failed to reveal any organic cause, he was discharged. He continued to attend his classes, but had to be transported to and from the campus, and carried a soft pillow about with him to relieve his pain while sitting through lectures and laboratories. Limping painfully about, giving an appearance of great stoicism, he made a pitiful picture indeed. Unfortunately, his illness served neither to remove him from the situation of stress, nor to increase his store of information. When, finally, he tried and failed in his examinations, he left school and simultaneously the back pain left him.

A 30-year-old Production Control Manager, of high superior basic ability, finds job pressure of any kind quite intolerable. So long as work demands can be met in rather routine fashion, he does an excellent job. In fact, this ability to meet everyday problems got him his managership. However, if increased orders or engineering changes place unexpected demands upon him, he just runs down. Management now can see this coming and can predict with astonishing accuracy the time between the emergence of the job problem and the day that he will not show up. Characteristically, he spends a week to ten days in bed with severe respiratory disfunction. No end of physical examinations have shown that no organic respiratory problems exist. To date, efforts to discuss the possibility of psychological causes have met with rebuff, both by the man and by management. The stalemate is clear: So long as his "solution" serves to solve *his* problem for him, he can see no need for change. So long as management's patience holds out, it sees no need for action.

We can see that loss of function states make an open plea for sympathy. In doing so, they also reveal their definite content of personalized emotion. In the cases described, they symbolize a load greater than can be borne. In essence, they say: "How can you expect me to meet what you call my problem? Can't you see that I am helpless to do so? Unless you help

me, I cannot survive!" The odd thing is that when something happens that removes the threatful situation (someone else takes over, or the threat itself is removed), recovery smacks of magic. Usually, however, the hysterical person finds some ever-loving soul who gives him the tender, motherlike care he demands and, unfortunately, feels is only his due. When he finds such a haven, his symptoms markedly may diminish, although they are carefully kept somewhat apparent as a psychologically Damoclean sword over the head of the mother-surrogate. They remain a "last resort," that can be called upon in full when the hysteric's one-way solution for life fails.

### **FATIGUE STATES (NEURASTHENIA)**

Fatigue states are typified by a deep feeling of having been "born tired." Furthermore, there seems to be a continuously recurring series of relapses. A word of warning! Just because you feel tired, you are not therefore entitled to a diagnosis of Neurasthenia. Most of us undergo feelings of fatigue to greater or lesser degree, but our lives are *not* rendered inactive because of them. The fatigue states we are talking about really are something. In these, the fatigue completely dominates the behavior of the person. If he gets out of bed at all, he must literally be forced to do so. In bed or out, the situation is little different. Whether horizontal or vertical, the fatigued one spends his time in bored, incompetent exhaustion.

Although this deadening lethargy predominates, it is accompanied by vague and various aches and pains. These latter complaints, probably a function of inactivity itself, justify his inability, as he sees things. They serve as proof for him that "something is wrong" somewhere. He also may be most positive in his statements about the ineptness of the medical profession. He *knows* something is wrong somewhere and he has the feelings to prove it! Why, therefore, can't the physicians unearth the trouble? When he is told, with x-ray, laboratory, and clinical findings to support it, that actually his general health is sound, considering his complete lack of exercise, he

replies with his clincher: "If there is nothing wrong with me, *why* do I feel so tired all the time?"

We have described the vicious circle of neurosis before. Here, we find a typical case of it. The exhaustion of the fatigue state arises out of an overactive and uncontrolled emotional life. The energy spent in sheer worry depletes the body reserves and the consequent feelings of fatigue serve only as fuel for the worry itself. Characteristically, the afflicted person gets reality reversed and convinces himself that if his *body* were right, he would have to *feel* well. Actually he has a point. Well bodies and feelings of well-being do go hand in hand, and fatigue conditions may be caused by bodily malfunctions. However, just because we feel tired does not necessarily imply that our bodies are impaired. Emotional maladjustment may be basic to both conditions and *is so* in the case of the neurasthenic.

When we humans experience severe and chronic lethargy, we also feel disappointed and discouraged. Life just is not to our liking. We demand too much and we give too little. Our problems weigh with suffocating heaviness upon our shoulders. Our emotional immaturity fastens upon us. We are bowed beneath an "Old Man of the Sea" that, like Sinbad's, is of our own making. We are swamped in self-pity and feel helpless, inadequate, and unimportant. We feel unwanted and a burden to ourselves and others. In many ways, we are. There is no room in our minds for the needs of others; we can think only of ourselves. It is important for understanding of fatigue states that there is no place in them for the usual earmarks of maturity: humility, sincerity, charity, integrity, and courtesy. These are outgoing, you-oriented attributes, and they cannot coexist with inclusive and demanding old-brain needs.

However, if the neurasthenic finds the pity and sympathy he demands, he can live with some happiness under the illusion that he is wanted. As in all neurosis, his symptoms help him to obtain some feelings of security and belongingness; feelings that his learned expectation of help from others prevent him from getting in any realistic way.

The following excerpts from the diary of a chronically fatigued female are helpful in understanding the neurasthenic's attitude. Notice the total emphasis upon personal feeling, combined with a complete refusal to accept any external demands.

I don't want to study. My stomach hurts, it hurts on the left side. It's shooting pains up into my heart. I can't study. It's cold in here, but it's too far to the window and anyway, the ironing board is in the way. . . . I wish I had ambition enough to clean this room—it's very messy. I need a bath. I need money, but I don't care. I don't care about anything but getting a home of my own where I can relax and do what I want to do. . . . I wish I had a cigarette, but I have no matches. How will I ever remember to buy any tomorrow? I could write it down, but I would forget where I wrote it—or that I wrote it at all. I never can remember anything. . . . I like B . . . , he doesn't think that I'm crazy and I don't have to comb my hair or put on make-up—that takes so much energy. I wonder if B . . . would die if I died—or if anyone else would? . . . If my Porgy and Bess records weren't on the shelf, I would play them. Everyone thinks I'm crazy for liking that and *La Bohème* and *Madame Butterfly*. Oh well, they're nuts. I do wish cigarettes came already opened. . . . I wish I had a new sweater. Something new always makes me feel good. Even a new experience. I would like to do something exciting. It would be fun to jump off a bridge with no water below and not die. . . . I wish I hadn't missed that test yesterday—there was no writing, only underlining one-word answers. That wouldn't have taken much energy. Energy, B . . . has the afternoon free. How will I have energy enough to get through this afternoon?

Here we see clear evidence of the formlessness and purposelessness in the life of the chronically fatigued person. The wishfulness and the "why must *I* be involved?" attitude plainly are revealed. Furthermore, it becomes apparent why treatment so often is futile in cases of long standing. Psychotherapy is effective only when the patient actively wants to be helped and is willing to *work* toward better adjustment. When the patient is not willing to *try*, the therapist can do but little: "Therein the patient must minister unto himself."



### THE SEARCH FOR ANTIPATHY

We have described some of the pitfalls that lurk along the life path of those whose early experiences have led them to depend upon the support of others for their own security feelings. However, neurotic trends have many forms. Just as often, they may appear as active attempts to survive *despite* others. The individual reaction to parental rejection or to parental domination *may* be a highly energetic rebellion. Such persons will have none of dependency; *they* will stand on their own two feet, *they* will survive and devil take the hindmost.

Right here, let's digress for a brief review. We have said that the reason largely is unknown *why* one child may react to frustrating conditions with dependency, another with aggression, and still a third with retreat. It may be that some constitutional factor is involved or perhaps the cue lies in behavior that "pays off" in the home. Possibly, the reaction to the first thwarting condition determines the future direction of behavior. It well may be that the child's original plea, attack, or retreat serves to reduce the threat he feels and comes to be a kind of "open sesame" for the future. Whatever the facts may be, home conditions that tend to produce attitudes of aggression are:

1. The use of parental love as reward or punishment. The parent caresses the child when he is "good" but is remote and cold when the youngster is "bad."
2. A rather complete refusal to treat the child as a person. The parent shows no consideration whatsoever for the child's ideas or wishes.
3. Any condition that makes the child feel *unwanted*.

When an attitude of aggressive attack comes to be the only solution to the problems of life, the person regards the world as an arena where success goes to the strong and to the ruthless. For him, life is a constant process of "doing unto others as they would do unto you—only do it first!" Other people are potential competitors in a struggle for survival. The strong

succeed, the weak fail, and security is determined by power and position. The "human values" have no place in his scheme of things. Material gain and social recognition are the only yardsticks of acceptance and belongingness.

Oftentimes, such materials have been garnered and yet the person feels no more secure than he did before. From his point of view, this only means that he has not yet gotten *enough* and so the process continues. This is because other factors basic to security, such as tolerance, understanding, compassion, appear to him as signs of weakness. Consequently, they have no place in his life equation and this equation is therefore incomplete. Therefore, he is driven toward greater and greater attainment, vainly searching outside of himself for that which can live only in his heart.

When such a person does arrive at the point where he has about all the possession and importance that man can get, he is able to meet life with fair success. The fact of the things he possesses serves him as justification for his outlook. Any insecurity he yet may feel can be subdued through the financial (and hence personal) independence that he experiences. Our culture genuflects deeply to the dollar sign. Consequently, enough dollars will permit a person to hurdle many of the traps that the way of single solution sets along life's highway.

Whether this is good, bad, or neither, we cannot say, but as a *fact* of our existence, we cannot question it. Unfortunately, all of us who may feel strong hostility toward the other fellow are not equally able to obtain sufficient status to protect ourselves. On the contrary, many of us find ourselves in subordinate positions where social and business pressures force us to show kindness, sympathy, and benevolence. When we strongly feel one way and yet must behave in quite another, our situations are ripe for internal conflict. This is especially true, and necessarily *only* so, when we personally are convinced that the way we feel is the only right way. When we identify our personal feelings with "human nature," we are usually in trouble indeed.

Consequently, we are forced to behave in ways that run counter to human nature, as we see things. The conflict



DRAWN BY AL JOHNS

**"I said people don't seem to like me for  
some reason—open your ears, fathead!"**

FIGURE 13. Reproduced by permission of the artist, Al Johns.

generated by this impasse often displays itself through neurotic symptoms. While these symptoms show considerable variance, they all have in common a "striking back" at an inherently unfriendly world.

The neurotic trends caused by the search for antipathy will be discussed under the headings of Obsessions, Compulsions, Manias, and Chronic Suspiciousness.

### **OBSSESSIONS**

Obsessions are characterized by recurring thoughts that the person finds highly uncomfortable, but from which he cannot rid himself. Often, he is fully aware of how illogical these ideas are but his attempts to force them out of mind seem to serve only to intensify their presence. As example, a person with strong religious convictions may discover himself thinking highly irreligious thoughts. Furthermore, he may find that he is, much to his horror, muttering blasphemous words and phrases under his breath. So long as he actively suppresses them, they do not occur, but the instant his mind turns to other things, back they come in full force. All at once, from out of nowhere it seems, the same old horrifying thoughts emerge. He cannot understand how they managed to get back into consciousness.

The process seems to be something like this. Initially, these thoughts occur as temporary but disquieting ideas. Although they readily are dismissed, they produce some anxiety because the person is so fearful of the behavior that the thoughts symbolize. Each subsequent recurrence adds its share to the anxiety load and our familiar circle establishes itself. Desperately, the obsessed one tries to break the chain. As the undesired thoughts come more and more to dominate his mind, his waking life largely may be spent in devising preventive measures. Often, these take the form of ritualistic movements of some part of the body. While these obsessive thoughts are not often carried out in actual behavior, the anxiety they create may become overwhelming. Consequently, serious withdrawal from reality may occur, even to suicide.

Obsessive personalities feel a strong need for safety. Many

times, they attempt to find it through routinized living, that often is extended into the life activities of those close to them. Their lives are kept orderly and neat and it is their expectation, and commonly their demand, that others regulate their own lives accordingly. The obsessive person may try to "control" his thoughts through an unusually neat precision in handling the events and things of his life. When others do not, he may be highly irritated. Commonly, he is rigid, demanding, and exact.

When such folks encounter stress, their immediate feelings are ones of hostility and humiliation. Since they perceive the world as composed of masters and slaves, they feel trespassed upon when frustrated. As a consequence, most obsessive thoughts center about acts of violence. These ideas of killing, poisoning, infection, and disease are sources of conflict in themselves. The possessor assures himself that he does not really feel this way. However, psychotherapy commonly reveals a deep-seated hostility toward mankind in general.

A young man of thirty complained of distressing ideas about cutting the throats of his wife, his child, or his mother. He felt that such thoughts were beyond contempt but, nevertheless, was at times afraid to touch a knife when in the home. The son of immigrant parents, he had been brought up in a household completely dominated by a harsh and severe mother, who punished with absolute impunity and praised or rewarded not at all. Further, the mother refused to let any of her sons leave her for marriage but, after one son killed himself because of her interference, she permitted the son under discussion to become engaged and ultimately was able to accept his fiancée as a daughter-in-law. She was now living in the son's home and friction between the two women was rife. During discussion, the son reported that he was aware of the mother's failings but that he understood her completely, and therefore did not blame her for behaving as she did. Relationships with his wife were reported as excellent. Further therapy convinced the son that actually he was carrying about a great deal of hostility toward both his wife and his mother. As he came to understand himself more adequately, improvement took place and after his wife also had been treated, he recovered entirely.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> A. Maslow, and B. Mittelmann, *Principles of Abnormal Psychology*, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1941, p. 391.

No clinical data are available for this illustration, although it is a most interesting one. In our work experience, we encountered a very successful man noted for the incisiveness with which he struck in business deals. We often had noted that his desk was immaculately ordered and secretarial woe attested to havoc wrought should these arrangements be changed. Papers were always square with the desk top and aligned with its edges. Furthermore, pointed or sharp objects were not tolerated. The most lethal instrument permitted was a ball-point pen. One day, when he was out of the office for a moment and prior to a scheduled meeting, a couple of us placed a daggerlike letter opener on his desk top. He obviously was startled when he saw it. Equally obviously he could not keep his hands from it. Although he said nothing about it, throughout the conference he played with it, appeared preoccupied and stared at us with what appeared to be a growing intensity. Despite our knowledge of the probabilities involved, we both were quite happy to reach the end of the meeting and to get out of that office. Needless to say, the "experiment" was not repeated.

### **COMPULSIONS**

Compulsions are forced acts that the person feels compelled to make. Although he may realize that the behavior is illogical, he cannot avoid doing it without experiencing strong anxiety. (The close tie-in with Obsessions should be obvious.) As he sees things, the ritual will ward off unforeseeable dangers if it is performed regularly. These rituals are many and varied. Some persons wash their hands so constantly that the skin gets rough and red. Others make trips about the house after bedtime to be sure that all doors are locked, gas outlets turned off, furnace checked, cigarettes out, and other possible hazards controlled, despite the fact that they *know* all these possibilities were covered before they went to bed. Still another may develop dressing and undressing rituals. In these, each article of clothing is handled in a certain order, folded and put away in a prescribed fashion. Other compulsives spend a few minutes at the beginning of each day carefully writing down in a pocket notebook each and every act they are to perform. They then spend the day in anxious conferences with their notebooks to

be certain that their daily activities are on schedule. Deviation from the prescribed order evokes deep anxiety, although they may be fully "aware" of the lack of real need for their precautions.

Compulsives commonly display a rigid personality that places great emphasis upon scrupulousness and minute attention to detail. These behaviors they defend stubbornly. To objections, they say: "Maybe so, but it's not going to *hurt* anything to do it this way, is it?" They try to so regulate their lives that nothing unanticipated can happen. Spontaneous behavior is shunned as the devil; their every action is governed by self-applied rule. This routinizing of their lives seems to them to be the only way of protecting themselves from the aggression they fear. Their world is a hostile and threatening place. Therefore, the only thing the little fellow can do is to bind himself within safe and proper behavior. The serious reduction in personal effectiveness that they experience seems small price to pay for the protection they believe they obtain.

Ordinary people find the compulsive annoyingly insistent upon what he calls "logical" behavior. To them, he appears to be guided entirely by a form of superstition, and actually he is. A housewife may maintain a home almost sterile in its cleanliness. She has one place and one place only for each household object. Woe betide the husband who forgets. At the same time, she may be sharply critical of her less compulsive friends because of their sloppy housekeeping. Commonly, the compulsive forgets that when any virtue is carried to an extreme, it becomes a vice. Nor does she see anything contradictory in the fact that her daily activities are governed by the horoscope she reads in the morning paper. The behavioral inconsistency that is characteristic of internal conflict often appears clearly in the compulsive personality.

During the war, a young officer candidate in a V-12 program attracted the attention of his roommates by the extreme orderliness in which he kept his desk and possessions. Each book occupied its particular place, pens and pencils were in an especial order; his shoes were stowed under his bunk according to regulations, but were always so placed that they pointed east. Any disarrangement, de-

liberate or accidental, of any of his belongings, was instantly noticed and objected to with undue strenuousness. Interested, they observed him further to discover that while waiting in chow line for breakfast, he invariably would face east, rotate his identification bracelet, and mutter a sort of incantation. Such behavior, originally indulged in only in spare time, began to creep into his military and academic activities, aided and abetted, unfortunately, by the comments of his acquaintances. When his "peculiar" actions came to the attention of his instructors and his commanding officer, he was referred for psychological examination. This revealed a rather characteristic compulsion state that had developed as a defense against the threat perceived when military service extracted him from his job as a bank teller in a small town. He had been very successful in this and was recognized as a meticulous and cautious worker. Apparently, he found a great deal of personal security in the well-ordered life such an occupation provided. He was sent to a base hospital for official examination, immediately given a discharge and when last heard from was back in his old job, happy and content, at least superficially.

### **MANIAS**

More serious than the compulsions, although springing from the same general source, are the irresistible tendencies to commit overt acts of aggression. Under this heading fall tendencies to steal (kleptomania), to set fires (pyromania), to drink (dipsomania), the conquest-via-seduction of nymphomania and satyriasis, to assault, and to kill. Persons, whose feelings of hostility are so strong that only such acts of open aggression can satisfy them, usually live apparently normal lives except when engaged in the hostile act. Ordinarily, these punitive acts are spaced by superficially quite normal behavior. If apprehended during the act of aggression, these people say that they just couldn't help themselves. In a sense, this is true. The aggressive behavior is more tolerable than the accumulated anxiety built up by the basic attitude of hostility and resentment. When the anxiety reaches a kind of saturation point, the person strikes back viciously and dramatically. Subsequently, he experiences sensations of relief. This is why these folk may attend a movie or go home to sleep soundly



after committing what most of us would regard as a "terrible thing."

We have difficulty in understanding them because we ordinarily do not know that the act of aggression is the lesser of two very real evils for the person. While he is watching the building burn or recovering from an alcoholic debauch, he may be a little bit remorseful, but all in all he feels a definite sense of relief, much as we experience when we successfully have completed an unpleasant task. What seems to happen is this: When feelings of rejection and humiliation reach a certain intensity, the person must find release through vengeful behavior, like stealing, burning, drinking, sexual activity, assaulting, or, more rarely, killing.

Keep in mind that those who believe that the world is a jungle where each man's hand is raised against them, also believe that to succeed, they must strike first. If their lives are marked by a lack of material success, they readily can adopt the philosophy that since man is rapacious by nature, he might as well act that way. From this, it is but a step to put the philosophy into practice.

A college instructor with a past history of unusual behaviors capped his own climax. While drinking, he entered a veterinary hospital, crawled into a large dog cage, and refused to move until the veterinarian had telephoned his department head. When his superior arrived, the instructor greeted him with: "You always said that I would go to the dogs. Well, I have!"<sup>5</sup>

P. G., an upper-class student in a coeducational college, came to the attention of her Dean because of numerous complaints concerning missing articles that turned up in P. G.'s room. When a search was made, P. G. was found to have from four to ten copies of a half-dozen different textbooks, a large collection of costume jewelry, numerous fountain pens, automatic pencils, and various articles of clothing. These were readily identifiable by other residents of the dormitory. Practically all of these things were identified as items that had been missing from the rooms of other girls during the current semester. Confronted with the evidence, P. G. burst into

<sup>5</sup> H. Cleckley, *The Mask of Sanity*, St. Louis, Mosby, 1955, p. 231.

tears and emphatically denied any knowledge whatsoever concerning how the articles came into her possession. Discussion with P. G. revealed a daughter of well-to-do adults who had given her every care except parental. She felt worthless, helpless, and humiliated, and carried about with her a distinct overburden of hostility. Her own recognition of the conflict within her was revealed tacitly by the fact that whenever the discussion touched, however remotely, upon her tendencies to steal, her behavior approached near hysteria. It was practically impossible to talk about anything close to her. She felt her exposure deeply and left school at the end of the semester. It was literally true that she did not know why she took things.

Compulsions and manias present evidence for the deep and compelling force behind neurotic trends. Those afflicted behave as they do, not necessarily because they "want" to, but because they have so developed that they can behave in no other way. This is why they need understanding rather than criticism, why they deserve reeducation instead of punishment, and why consideration may be more helpful than censure. They behave as they have learned to behave. The fault lies not so much in their willfulness as perhaps in our ignorance.

#### **CHRONIC SUSPICION (PARANOID TENDENCIES)**

Those, whose solution to life problems primarily is one of aggressive hostility, often possess a strong belief that they have been unfairly treated. They feel that life is a constant uphill battle against continuous opposition by others. We have seen that this unusual sensitivity to rebuff often can be traced back to misunderstanding and punitive parental behavior. If, to this expectation of insult, there be added a tendency toward isolation or secretiveness, the ground is prepared for the development of attitudes of suspiciousness toward the motives of others. When such attitudes are present, the person goes about with a chip on his shoulder. He rather expects that the challenge he offers will be accepted and he attempts to anticipate the attack he expects. This leads him, time after time, into perceiving slight where none actually is intended. Such people often wear their feelings outside themselves and hurt is nearly

inevitable. They never have learned to compensate for the "I" in their human equation.

They have, therefore, failed to develop the usual ability to observe life from the viewpoints of others. They see life sheerly in terms of their own needs and feelings. Consequently, what actually are misunderstandings on their part are treated as real events because they do not use the ordinary checks and balances we call "discussion." They do not share *their* interpretation of life events with others; alone, they are counsel, judge, and jury. To them, life *is* as it appears to be. Since they assume (as do we also) that others regard life just as they do, the conclusions they reach need only to be plausible to be accepted as true.

Any of us, who is incapable of viewing human activity through the eyes of others, can only see all life as a reflection of his own. Through the now familiar mechanism of projection, such a person perceives about him that which he inwardly anticipates. Therefore, what people in general believe, think, and do is conditioned by his own attitude toward them. This person, feeling that life is a free-for-all, will sense personal implication in the most impersonal remark, and his life may revolve about a fixed belief that he is being discriminated against. He cannot adapt his personal convictions to actual facts nor can he accept suggestion or correction from others. Yet, at the same time, he is highly sensitive to, and greatly concerned with, the attitudes and behaviors of others toward him. He broods, rather than checking, and he lives increasingly within himself. The conflict is clear. While extremely sensitive to others, he does nothing to verify the conclusions he draws.

Subsequent to a discussion of adjustment and maladjustment in a psychology course, a student requested a personal interview. During it, he reported that he had made his own way since he was a kid but lately, he had been noticing an increasing tendency toward sensitivity to the behavior of other students. He also wondered whether the class discussion of that day had been directed at him. He said that he often felt that people were watching him and talking about him although he was also certain that they were not. Inas-

much as he showed some interest in projective tests, a discussion of these techniques was begun. This continued over several interviews despite his insistence that he be given one: it being felt that insight into projective procedures might lead him to self-recognition. Ultimately, this proved to be true and during the fifth interview, he wondered if possibly he was seeing in others what he expected to find. Asked if he thought this might be the case, he replied that he guessed it was. After he had come to accept this whole-heartedly, he decided to ignore his feelings of sensitivity and deliberately to enter into the activities of others. Although the following out of his decision was difficult for him, he persisted and now socializes as much as any member of his fraternity, and, although not openly friendly, no longer lives exclusively within himself.

The fact that this youth voluntarily asked for help was of the utmost importance. It meant that complete rigidity had not yet been reached and therefore that he could accept the idea that maybe *he* was out of step. Furthermore, he also wanted to do something about his own situation. Consequently, the two great barriers to assistance (rigidity and apathy) were not present. It also was highly important that he, rather than the interviewer, first advanced the suggestion that perhaps his reaction to others was a projection of his own feelings. Typically, the success of psychotherapy is attendant upon the individual recognizing and accepting the facts of his inner life. In fact, reasonably complete readjustment is a direct function of such acceptance being initiated within the person himself rather than being imposed upon him from without.

### **THE SEARCH FOR APATHY**

The third general technique of one-way solutions is characterized by the word isolation. When this is the only approach to life, the person strives for total self-sufficiency. He believes that if he can attain this, he will no longer need to be at all dependent upon others nor yet will he have need for any contact with them. Such folk approach the solitary animal condition that man often has been accused of being. These people live within a society yet are apart from it. They see

man in general as an independent creature who goes through the motions of social living only because it is expedient and personally advantageous. The apathetic person finds no place within himself for closeness with others; in fact, he actively fears such attachment. He regards society as a collection of other walled-in personalities that communicate, one with the other, only because it is necessary. Personal interdependence has no significance. The group becomes a social construct only and has no psychological reality.

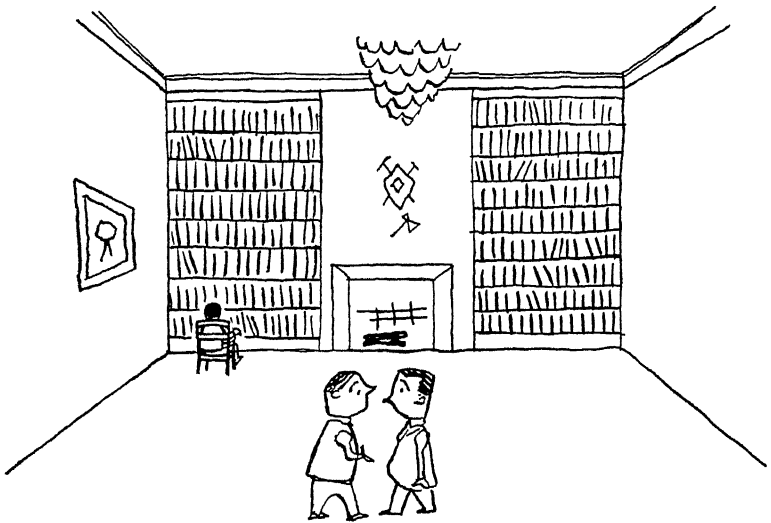
This attitude of detachment seems to arise out of childhood experiences that are characterized by a forced reliance upon the individual's own resources. When a child's early life is typified by mobility (because father's job may keep the family constantly moving about), the youngster may be so often thrown upon his own resources that he comes to regard this as the only way of life. He has no opportunity to get roots down and is forced over and over again to adapt to strange situations. Complete self-reliance well may come to be his only recourse.

Parental separation, when the child is young, also seems to make for the development of attitudes of detachment. Under these conditions, the child reaches out for support, cannot find it, and therefore turns into himself. He easily may develop a conviction that safety and security are to be found in isolation since whenever he ventures outside himself, he meets only rejection. Race, religious, and color prejudices may play a similar role. The little stranger in a community may be forced into himself because his life experience is such that some kind of insulation is essential.

Another factor that may develop feelings of isolation in the child is overprotection. This overprotective pattern is the one that keeps the child away from age-mates and prevents normal socialization. When this happens, the child has no recourse other than to develop self-sufficiency. He must be sufficient unto himself or be totally lost.

Notice that here, as elsewhere in the neurotic trends, we are talking about an exaggeration of otherwise normal behavior. All of us seek isolation at times, we have moments when per-

sonal privacy is imperative, but we do not make the search for apathy our only way of meeting life. We are not frightened by the thought of emotional attachments and we have not erected rather impenetrable barriers between our inner selves and the world of others. Ordinarily, we do not fixate upon any one way of meeting all issues. We may be dependent, aggressive, or detached, but our behavior is a function of the external demands rather than a blind, internal compulsion.



PONSONBY THINKS, Y'KNOW!

FIGURE 14.

When personal insulation has become the method of choice in responding to life, things go well so long as the self-sufficient one's life situation permits. However, when this person encounters problems that his one-way solution will not solve, breakdown commonly results. When the personal isolationist meets with stress that he cannot resolve, neurotic symptoms appear. We shall discuss the neurotic traps to which detach-

ment may lead under the headings of Traumatic Neurosis, Amnesia, and Hypochondria.

### **TRAUMATIC NEUROSIS**

Traumatic neuroses are reactions to sudden, unpredictable, and actually unpreventable experiences, that are perceived by the person as serious threats to him personally. As often as not, this interpretation is a factual one since the symptoms may appear shortly after a near escape from death itself.<sup>6</sup> What makes such incidents so especially wounding to the detached person is not so much the threat of death as such, as it is the realization that despite the barricades he erects, there are situations that his self-sufficiency is powerless to prevent. This forced recognition of the inadequacy of his defense is what may propel him into neurosis. When isolation and detachment fail, all is lost. The fact that there are life situations entirely determined by extrapersonal factors is irreconcilable with his conviction that he can be enough to himself.

After an accident, any of us may experience some of the symptoms of traumatic neurosis. These are characterized by weakness, shakiness, and nausea, coupled with a repeated re-living of the event in imaginal form. Within a few hours or days, however, these symptoms disappear and we think little more about it all. When, however, we lean heavily upon a completely personal sanctuary for ourselves, such an experience may leave relatively permanent effects.

Under this latter condition, the person develops severe feelings of anxiety, he trembles, perspires, and becomes extremely agitated each time he recalls the event. He is irritable, hypersensitive, loses his zest for life, and his sleep is filled by disturbing dreams of bodily injury or a repetitious reëxperiencing of the accident situation. Physiologically, the anxiety may display itself in a rapid pulse, breathing difficulties, and dilated pupils. These symptoms characterize a person who perceives the world not only as inevitably dangerous but also one in

<sup>6</sup> Many illustrations may be found in R. Grinker, and J. Spiegel, *Men Under Stress*, Philadelphia, Blakiston, 1945.

which he now feels himself to be quite helpless. They are signs of an ultimate surrender.

A young woman whose educational history involved the attending of 25 different schools in almost as many different communities between the age of six and fourteen sustained minor injury in an automobile accident. The car in which she was riding was forced into a utility pole by another motorist who was intoxicated. She was dazed, extremely frightened, and unable to sleep that night because of recurring images of headlights bearing down upon her. Although, prior to this experience, she had been a good traveler, she now became anxious and fearful whenever her activities necessitated an automobile trip. Further, the fear spread to include all forms of travel. When riding in an automobile, she remains highly tense throughout the trip, constantly admonishing the driver to beware of this or that contingency. While her fear has diminished somewhat, she still, twenty years after the event, suffers anxiety while traveling via auto, particularly when driving conditions are poor. Much of her present distress would have been reduced by psychological treatment immediately after the accident had anyone about her realized the true nature of her discomfort.

### **AMNESIA**

Loss of identity is characterized by a period, often recurring, of confusion, bewilderment, and the loss of personal memory. The person commonly is unable to recognize close relatives or even his name when it is spoken to him. Other than for this loss of personal identity, his memory is sound, his intelligence unimpaired, and he shows normal perceptual abilities. The attack may last from a few hours up to many weeks.

We can perhaps understand how a person may forget who he is when his way of solution, heretofore successful, fails him completely. When detachment no longer works and it is his only line of defense, nothing is left. Amnesia then becomes a denial of the self that failed. In order to avoid plunging into the abyss of total inadequacy, the individual denies the existence of the *person* who failed. Consequently, he is able to escape the reality with which his failure has faced him.



A self-employed professional man felt that he "had it made." He had gravitated into the consulting business and had worked up a group of clients that kept him quite as busy as he wished to be. His fee was sizable and his service was effective. However, because his life attitude centered about his common expression: "I can handle anything that happens to me!," he failed to recognize that his very effectiveness trained clients to do the job themselves. As a consequence, their need for him began to tail off. This annoyed him and, as it grew, confused him greatly. Valiantly he tried hard to do more of what he already had done, but there was just no demand. It had always been difficult for him to "sell" (he just could not "abase" himself enough to approach prospects—his business had grown entirely through his reputation for efficiency and, being busy, he had followed up on no new contacts), and his income began to drop alarmingly. One evening, while driving along a well-known road, he suddenly found that he did not know where he was nor yet (and this was infinitely worse) who he was. He stopped, searched his own pockets, and found identification that he did not recognize but that was yet strangely familiar. Ultimately, he got home to put in several weeks of deeply personal confusion. The event taught him nothing nor were the efforts of professional colleagues to help him of any avail. He still is scrambling frantically to rescue a lost cause, and we who know him expect more serious blackouts to come.

### **HYPOCHONDRIA**

Hypochondria is an endless malady in which the person complains constantly of various aches, pains, and feelings of illness to a degree unjustified by his actual physical condition. He shows a morbid concern for his bodily functions and rapidly magnifies any real ache or pain he may have. Minor ailment quickly becomes major disease. Usually, he is convinced that he has some hidden malady despite the failure of repeated examinations to reveal its presence. He shows an anxious expectancy of serious illness and he continuously doses himself with nostrums of all kinds. He is the natural prey of the quack.

He often comes from a long line of the imaginary ill. His parents commonly are "complainers," they maintain an

enormous supply of drugs and medications in the home, and the clinical thermometer is as common about the household as writing pencils. Any feeling of malaise is an emergency, temperatures are taken, any deviation from an exact 98.6 is catastrophe, and someone always is in bed. Consequently, the child's health becomes a source of distinctly undue concern, and the youngster grows up feeling "different" and isolated.

Adults afflicted with the endless malady of hypochondria often show feelings of isolation, a high degree of self-interest, and a profound sense of rejection. They are seriously insecure, they feel that they do not quite fit into the scheme of things, and their bodily complaints assist them in establishing themselves as different and apart from others. Their ill health serves to justify their conviction of uniqueness within mankind. Consequently, it is easy to see how any serious threat of genuine rejection or failure may precipitate them into invalidism.

A brilliant but highly insecure executive often developed severe sacroiliac pains whenever his job necessitated a business trip. However, he spent his vacations in touring about the country and boasted that there were few places in the United States that he had not seen. Furthermore, he had colored movies to prove it. The recent development of competition within his industry, however, began to demand that he spend increasing time in customers' plants. This meant travel, and a lot of it. Hobbling about, he did the very minimum. After repeated physical examinations had unearthed no reason for his pain, and the company psychologist had quite thoroughly discussed the problem with him, management took a stand. He was told to produce, or leave. Two months later (as of the present writing) he still is in bed.

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# 1. THE MAIN PROBLEMS OF LIFE

Growth is the only evidence  
of life.

—Cardinal Newman

**W**E HAVE TALKED ABOUT THE PROBLEMS LIFE PRESENTS to us and of the need to meet them in realistic fashion. We also have tried to describe and define what is meant by realistic and effective adjustment itself. Let us now attempt to describe these problems specifically and to discuss ways and means by which they may be met. Let us look at the major tasks that face us all as we go along life's highway.

Although the precise nature of the problem each individual encounters will vary with his experience and training, there are certain common situations that each of us must sometime face. Whether or not we may have thought much about these issues is beside the point. The fact is that, like it or not, our culture so operates that we all must deal with these problems sooner or later. Each of us has no choice but in some way to face and to work out his solution to the problems that center around sex, marriage, religion, vocation, and old age. From these, there is no escape. Every one of us must sometime decide what we are going to do about members of the opposite sex and whether we shall marry one of them, what kind of work we shall do, how we plan to stand in relation to the Infinite, and to what we may turn when our workaday life is done. It is within these five great life areas of decision that we shall describe various points of issue and what we humans can do about them.

In passing, we can comment that it is something of a travesty on man that these areas should be problem areas at all. There is nothing basic to sex, marriage, vocation, religion, or old

age that should make stumbling blocks of them, *but* there is a great deal in man's attitude toward them that can, and does, cause trouble. These attitudes are reflected in the statements that follow:

Sex is a dirty word.  
Marriages are made in heaven.  
One job is better than another.  
There is only one path to Glory.  
Old people have outlived their usefulness.

We have talked about many instances that show how much of our behavior is a direct result of how we *feel* about a situation. It is of course true that if we believe a thing to be true, we will behave as though it were true indeed. Our behavior is a function of our attitudes. Therefore, if we believe in these five statements, then we will behave as though they were statements of actual fact. The *fact* is that these statements are downright lies! This is what makes them stumbling blocks, and as long as we accept them as true in our minds, just that long are *we* going to have trouble.

We get ourselves so mixed up about what we wish were true, what we feel ought to be true, and what actually is true that it should surprise no one if confusion results. We continuously confuse our *value judgments* with the factual case. When we don't like a situation, we say: "It shouldn't *be* this way!" We then go on to behave as though the situation actually were as we feel it should be, and because we then begin to bang our heads against the facts, we get mad all over again. Only when we are willing to recognize and to accept a fact *as it exists*, have we any hope at all of dealing with it adequately.

One wonders what a competent and unbiased observer from Mars would make of the man on Earth. I suspect that we would be most unhappy with his conclusions.

### **EARTHMAN**

Think for a moment. What would such an observer observe? He would find that of all life forms, man is the only one that attempts periodic mass suicide through war. He would see

that man apparently deliberately arranges his life so that over 10 percent of its kind break down under self-induced stress. He would have difficulty reconciling the killing of pigs and the destruction of crops by one group when others of its kind are starving. Why, he might ask, is man so ignorant when he is surrounded with vast stores of knowledge? Why does he revere courage and yet seem afraid of life? Why is one group always "right" and another always "wrong?" Why must color of skin or religious conviction determine the Earthman's worth? Obviously, this list of contradictions could be extended almost indefinitely. Think some more. You will find that you, yourself, can add many and many a one.

Yet, even to our observer from outer space, certain positives would be apparent. He would discover that Earthman had more than doubled average life expectancy, that the physical environment had quite thoroughly been conquered, and that the very conquering of life itself seemed near at hand. (Here too, you can add many, many more accomplishments.) He would find an organism with astounding *potential* and that therefore showed infinite promise however confusing its current *behavior* seemed to be. In short, we suspect, he would find a creature that had achieved every type of control except self-control!

Whatever our man from Mars might discover, he certainly would arrive at the conclusion that Earthman was struggling with a thing of its own creating. He would find, as he read in our literature, startling resemblance between the monster that Frankenstein built and the "problems" that Earthman encounters. Both of these human creations would be seen to be artificial assemblies in which bits of reality had been combined into new but distorted form. Frankenstein built his out of several cadavers; social Earthman has composed his by stitching partial truths into mass superstition. Both creations are monstrous and both run roughshod over mankind.

In the main, such are the so-called problems that we have created out of the facts within sex, marriage, work, religion, and old age. Most of the stress that man experiences within these areas simply is self-induced. It is the attitudes and the

beliefs that he himself brings to the problem that result in the foul-up we see so commonly about us. Like all problems, these too cease to exist once they have been resolved. Consequently, they do not exist as *problems* for the well-adjusted person. He faces them squarely and, casting myth and wishfulness aside, he approaches them in the light of the factual information that he can obtain. Such factual information is available to all of us if we are willing to look for it and also are willing to accept the facts we find.

Generally speaking, no one person solves each of his life problems equally well because each of us tends to react to a fact in terms of our learned attitudes toward the area to which the fact applies. However, there is no real reason why each problem may not be equally well resolved, as the evidence we are about to present will indicate. At the very least, there is no reason at all why our batting averages of solution cannot be markedly increased. The barrier to improved solution lies, as you will suspect, in the impulsiveness of old-brain functions that govern so much of too many of our lives. Only those few fortunate ones whose training for life has prepared them to utilize more rational practices will solve life's tasks with the effectiveness that the new brain makes possible.

Since most of us basically are old-brain creatures, our discussion will center about techniques that permit the development of rational, socially adequate behavior that alone can make for genuine happiness in life. We shall see that sexual adjustment, marital contentment, job satisfaction, adaptation to the Ultimate, and acceptance of senescence all are obtainable by each of us *if* our early training is thoughtfully given and is based upon available fact. Furthermore, it will become apparent that even though such training were not given to us, there are many, many things we still can do with ourselves if, again, we are willing to accept and to apply the *facts* in our daily living. Of course, this is the hard way.

You are now reasonably convinced (I hope) that the adult becomes the kind of person that the child has been trained to be. Now it is quite possible that the withdrawn child of little social experience may develop into an adult whose social skills

are quite effective. However, the odds are against it and the facts remain that while the social skills of the compensated introvert may be highly efficient, *he* never feels comfortable about them. They are unpleasant things that he knows he must do if he is to get the things he wants.

So too, the rejected youngster who regards the world as hostile to him may become a meek follower of others down the path of life but, again, the probabilities are not in favor of this. If, in adult life, he does show submissiveness, it will be at the price of internal conflict and guilt feelings. It is extremely doubtful that he will be comfortable in the role circumstances force him to play. Similarly, the child, who has discovered that dependence makes things easy for him, may grow up into a strong leadership position, but don't bet on it. The chance is all toward his continuous search for a succession of "mothers" on whom he can lean. The early attitudes that are developed within the home ordinarily condition the way in which the person regards life in general. This is true because such reactions are *overlearned* and therefore become as automatic as walking, swimming, and, of course, talking. The laws that apply to habit formation in all cases apply as well to the development of personality traits. With practice, the behavior pattern becomes increasingly stronger, is more easily evoked, and attains an autonomy of its own. There simply is no reason why personality traits cannot initially be socially oriented and adequate; only ignorance and superstition stand in the way.

### **THE HOME**

If you feel that the home is being unfairly treated in our discussion, let us look at some facts. Each year, well over 100,000 minors are charged with juvenile crimes. It must be true that at least an equal number of youngsters are taken to guidance clinics when the parents have given up. Many, many more thousands are "problems" to parent and teacher. It would be odd indeed if each of these children wholly were to blame or if all of them collectively were wrong. There just must be some other common factor.



The factor common in all of these juvenile problems emerges from the records of the courts, the clinical psychologists, and the psychiatrists. From these, it conclusively has been shown that the large majority of behavior problems in our young arise out of faulty home training. It is a problem of delinquent parents rather than one of delinquent children. To this, you may add the fact that a survey of 30,000 convicts revealed that the most important contributing factor to their lives of crime was the failure of the home to give them a sense of social responsibility.<sup>1</sup>

In another study of the personality structure of nursery-school children, some of the dynamics of parent-child relationships were revealed.<sup>2</sup> An examination of the biographical summaries of these children shows the following relations between parental attitude and child behavior.

PARENTAL ATTITUDES	CHILD BEHAVIOR
Standards held too high and too early	<i>Anxious</i>
	<i>Fearful</i>
	<i>Hyperactive</i>
	<i>Insensitive</i>
	<i>Irritable</i>
	<i>Self-conscious</i>
	<i>Shy</i>
	<i>Superficial</i>
	<i>Tense</i>
Favoritism	<i>Aggressive</i>
	<i>Attention demanding</i>
	<i>Compulsive</i>
	<i>Critical</i>
	<i>Cyclical moods</i>
	<i>Fearful</i>
	<i>Nervous habits</i>
	<i>Overeager to please</i>
	<i>Resentful</i>
	<i>Sullen</i>

<sup>1</sup> C. Burlingame, If child guidance clinics—why not parentoriums? *Conn. State Med. J.*, 1947, 11: 829-832.

<sup>2</sup> R. Alschuler, and L. Hottwick, *Painting and Personality; A Study of Young Children*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1947, 2 vols.

176 *Problems of Human Adjustment*

Emotional immaturity	Domineering Feminine behavior (boys) <i>Hyperactive</i> Lack of initiative <i>Preoccupied</i> <i>Solitary</i> Sophisticated
Overprotection	<i>Apathy</i> Attention demanding Authority bound <i>Compliant</i> Dreamy <i>Irritable</i> Selfish
Feminine dominance (male children)	Adult behavior <i>Detached</i> <i>Fantasy</i> Feminine Self-conscious Shy <i>Solitary</i>
Perfectionism	Dependent upon adults <i>Detached</i> Inactive <i>Solitary</i> <i>Shy</i> <i>Inconsiderate</i>
Dissension and/or separation	<i>Attention demanding</i> Distractable <i>Immature</i> Jealous <i>Insecure</i> <i>Withdrawn</i>
Rejection	Distractable Hyperactive Night terrors

	Running away
	Sullen
	<i>Withdrawn</i>
Happy and affectionate	Adaptable
	<i>Affectionate</i>
	<i>Friendly</i>
	<i>Happy</i>
	Imaginative
	Mature
	Original
	Practical
	Realistic
	<i>Self-reliant</i>
	<i>Sociable</i>
	Varied interests

In this summary of the data obtained from the youngsters, the italicized items are those behavior patterns that occurred most frequently. The conclusions to be drawn are self-evident. They affirm our central thesis that poor adjustment and good adjustment tend to breed themselves. The home clearly can be seen to be the principal proving ground for the person's ultimate adjustment to life and its problems. If within the home itself, the main problems of life are poorly handled, the child who grows up there can be expected to show similar difficulties in coping with these same problems as they emerge for him. The issue is clear: If we are to face life clearly and effectively, then we must be given training in such effectiveness within the home. This is true despite the torrent of words often poured upon us as the home tries to alibi itself. What is more, if home training is to be maximally effective, it must begin at birth.<sup>3</sup>

Unfortunately, the home as an institution of training seems largely to fail in its task. What of the school and the church? We can say only that with these two institutions as well, the same general picture prevails. Just as parents have tried to perpetuate the past, so too, teachers and preachers salaaming deeply to a world of wish have enclosed youth in an armor of

<sup>3</sup> R. Dreikurs, *The Challenge of Parenthood*, New York, Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1947.

superstition and sent him out to struggle with reality. All three of our major training centers are equally guilty, none is blameless. Each of them has attempted to guide and direct human behavior through pious pleas and pressures buttressed by fear. In all three, ideals have been held up as actualities, and "what should be" spoken of as though it were "what actually is." The assumption would seem to have been that mere exposure to the ideal should be sufficient for the ideal to be attained. This learning by contagion is primitive magic, pure and simple.

If he is to be brave, let him eat the heart of the lion.  
 If he is to be wily, let him eat the brain of the water buffalo.  
 If he is to be quick, let him eat the legs of the cheetah.  
 If he is to be strong, let him eat the back of the elephant.  
 If he is to be stealthy, let him eat the paws of the panther.

We are guilty of just this kind of thinking when we hold up an ideal and call it a fact. This is especially true when by the calling, we assume that identity has been established. Furthermore, we characteristically support our modern incantations with threat; threat of failure, threat of weakness, threat of ostracism. We just ignore the historical fact that every time we have tried a *forced* mating between an ideal and a fact, the result has been a hybrid—sterile and often monstrous.

### THE SCHOOL

In the main, the school has continued the concept of the medieval scholar right into present-day living. The assumption apparently is that reality adequately can be met on a purely verbal level and that such things as ability, interest, and motivation can be handled by talking about them. One suspects that education's coat of arms would feature college professors and manuscripts in opposite quarters while the central device would be a larynx—rampant!

In general, predetermined requirements are established and the children are pushed through them without much regard for the abilities and readinesses of the individual child. Truth

seems to be regarded as fixed for all time, and the educators will tell you that they *know* what truth is, or at least what truth is necessary. This forced channeling into rigid ways of behaving serves primarily to stifle the original flexibility of the child. Since adjustment is a function of *growth*, the school builds automaton and fails to develop *persons*. Ever wonder what happened to the curiosity and interests the preschool child so commonly shows? How it was that out of intense and inclusive interest there should emerge the indifferent acceptance that so often characterizes youth? The answer just may be found in the comment written at the end of an examination that was quite different from the usual examination form: "What's the idea of a test like this? I came to college to memorize, not to think!"

There is something about our usual educational experiences that kills the desire to learn. The probabilities are that the lethal agent is found in customary teaching procedures. He who would teach will find that he will be endlessly drilled in method, technique, and practice, as though the human mind were a kind of automatic machine whose efficiency is increased by the constant application of a particular procedure. The facts of human variance in abilities, interests, aptitudes, and attitudes are quite ignored. Professional education indeed loses sight of *man* in its obsession with techniques.

Industry is today beginning to question the effectiveness and validity of the emphasis upon "training programs" that have run wild ever since World War II. The question is being asked: "What have we gotten for the money we have spent?" To date the answers have been highly embarrassing. One reason for this is that the usual training program also taught "technique" in the absence of information about man (on whom the techniques were to be used) and consequent basic understanding of him. It should be small wonder that the long-term effects of such training turn out to be frightfully small. The difference between Industry and Education is the fact that Industry will *do* something rather than just to talk about the situation.

There can be no doubt that man can learn more effective behavior when the teaching is based upon factual assessment

and understanding of his nature. The facts from the psychological clinics are overwhelming at this point. Furthermore, a few industrial training programs that began with the nature of man rather than with techniques for the control of his behavior have shown demonstrable effectiveness. (Such effectiveness can be *measured* through comparative studies in the areas of absenteeism, scrappage, turnover, productivity, grievances, morale, and attitude.)

However, if education is to do things differently than it always has done them, it must measure the effectiveness of its practices against real rather than verbal standards. If it is true that the school serves as the first extrahome introduction to the responsibilities of the workaday life, then by all means the school should find out just what these responsibilities actually are. In so far as can be determined, this step has not been taken at anything other than the discussional level. Instead, most professional educators seem to have both feet firmly planted in midair. They talk about preparing youth for promptness in completing assignments, for adapting himself to the differences between people, and for coöperating in mutual tasks. They talk about it, but what actually happens? Experience with youth so trained (whether at the college or the shop level) indicates that they have learned how to procrastinate, how to "get by," how to avoid effort, and where to look to find the "angles."

College students themselves have a common practice of turning in work weeks after it was due with complacent expectation that they will receive full credit. Book reports often are inept copyings without benefit of quotation marks. Campuses are rife with ways of getting a grade out of a particular instructor without "cracking a book." Yet we cannot blame the student. Faculty members will give a three-hour essay examination in which each student may write a dozen or more pages. Thirty or forty such papers add up to hours of reading, if the reading is critical. However, if the exam is given in the morning, the professor often happily trots over with his final grades by midafternoon. Of course, the student is not fooled. Such examination papers have had their centers filled with

garbled versions of the Gettysburg Address, the Preamble to the Constitution, and with sheer nonsense material, yet remained quite undetected! Furthermore, individual professors will give the same examination repeatedly despite the well-known *facts* of fraternity and sorority filing systems. Year after year, the same themes and book reports are assigned. Some faculty members notoriously are allergic to low grades; they just never give them. We have seen that man, as well as other organisms, lives only up to the demands of his environment and no farther. Should we be surprised that when the demands are low, the student does no more than he must? It makes a good question: "Who should be condemned?"

It is true, of course, that the college student only repeats the working habits that he developed in his earlier school life. While this fact may in part excuse the student, there is no excuse whatsoever for the faculty person who permits sloppy performance. Some of these professors let things slide the easy way because of a natural dislike for work. Others maintain very loose standards because they feel that the students will like them for it. They try to curry favor by making academic success easy to achieve. They do not realize that the constant doing of favors for the other person reaps only resentment and contempt. The complacent self-satisfaction these teachers usually display would most rudely be shattered were they to sit in on a few student "bull sessions" where they were the central topic. While a faculty member commonly fools himself, he very seldom is successful in fooling his students.

The facts seem to be that the school, as a training institution, does not face its task realistically. Commonly, students whose basic abilities scatter themselves over the whole range of the human spread are bundled together and subjected to identical teaching methods. Generally, the demands are low and the work made easy through the technique of spoon feeding. Serious studies characteristically reveal that educational standards and practices are unrealistic in nature.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, this training is supposed to fit a person for the demands of

<sup>4</sup>B. Fine, *Our Children are Cheated*, New York, Holt, 1947. S. Laycock, *Cheating Your Children*, Toronto, Ryerson, 1947.

life. One wonders. It is a fact that most people make out reasonably well but the question of whether this is *because of* or *in spite of* their education simply has not been answered.

In the school, as in the home, there is need for more effective understanding of man as a striving creature. The teacher who is low in self-understanding cannot be expected to understand the personalities she encounters in her students. Since she therefore cannot, or will not, adjust to them as *individuals*, she will tend to increase whatever tendencies toward maladjustment already may be present. The well-adjusted teacher promotes mental health; the poorly adjusted teacher promotes mental illness and the equation is just this simple. Yet, what is done to assure that the prospective teacher is a person of sound adjustment?

Moreover, the problems that American education faces are heightened by the attitudes of the American public toward it. Most of us seem to feel just a little contemptuous about the teaching profession. We commonly insist that if a person possibly could do anything else, he would not be teaching. We then set out to prove our point by resolutely refusing to make teaching financially worth while or to equip it with its necessary materials. We want a well-done job but we refuse to pay for it. We force ineptness upon the teacher and, in sound human fashion, place the blame everywhere except where it rightfully belongs. We ask for craftsmanship but we will not underwrite an adequate apprenticeship training program.<sup>5</sup>

It is consequently small wonder that teachers do things the easy way. Facts are taught through drill, and real issues ignored as not being part of the job. Rote learning and "memory work" become the order of the day. It is the rare person of deep purpose who is willing to submit himself to the various masters he must serve (School Boards, Parents, Students, Administrators, and Communities) and still seriously try to train youth for the realities in life. Parenthetically, members of these "masters" should hear the comments of the teacher when hair is let down.

<sup>5</sup> An easy to read description of the situation can be found in: G. Leonard, Jr., The truth about the teacher crisis, *Look*, February 21, 1956, pp. 40-48.



Unfortunately, a courageous teacher runs certain risks. If he attempts to do a realistic job, he faces criticism and censure. This may result in actual discharge by a Board whose pet beliefs have been stepped upon. Teachers have been fired for "giving the students an unbiased point of view!" If we are to judge the "masters" by their behavior, it is evident that the teacher is expected to so conduct his classes that no one is offended and to teach only that which the "masters" believe to be true.

As a people, we seem to want definiteness, concreteness, and specificity, whether or not the basic concepts are meaningful, useful, or, unfortunately, even true. Consequently, the teacher often is forced into becoming a kind of weakly communicating device that "teaches things" to students. This kind of teaching commonly displays itself through a relatively meaningless transfer of the notes of the instructor to the notebooks of the students. After this dutiful copying exercise, the same material is parroted back during examinations. The docile and submissive make the best grades and consequently achieve the highest academic success. They, you see, because of their uncritical acceptance of what they have been told, best are able to reproduce the course content as it was given to them. This is *learning*?

The frightening thing about all of this is that we have known for so long of the futility of educational practices such as these. Long ago, a man, much ahead of his time, told the following story:

A friend of mine, visiting a school, was asked to examine a young class in geography. Glancing at the book she said: "Suppose you should dig a hole in the ground, hundreds of feet deep, how should you find it at the bottom—warmer or colder than on top?" None of the class replying, the teacher said: "I'm sure they know, but I think you don't ask the question quite rightly. Let me try." So, taking the book, she asked: "In what condition is the interior of the globe?" and received the immediate answer from half the class at once: "The interior of the globe is in a state of igneous fusion."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> W. James, *Talks to Teachers*, New York, Holt, 1900, p. 150. Reproduced by permission of the publisher.

The meaningfulness of "igneous fusion" was no more clear to these primary-school pupils than are many of the concepts regurgitated to instructors at the college level. As we have said, all organisms (including students) will meet the demands placed upon them but are most unlikely to reach any higher. Most teachers, forced to bow to the status quo, drill students in rote memory, examine them for what they have been told, and penalize them for thinking. The lecture method is adored because it is easy, ego-flattering, and because "learning" can be so readily measured. When the student reports back with reasonable precision that which he has been previously told, he has, of course, learned well!

An unfortunate result of all of this is that teaching, like preaching, appeals to the basically insecure personality. Since both professions permit a person to "tell" other people with little need actively to defend his point of view (and no need whatsoever if he stays within the bounds of things-that-always-have-been), this position of authority is a powerful bolster for a weak personality structure. Studies show that the teacher population possesses more than its normally expected share of maladjusted personalities. The same statement holds true for divinity school students. In both, standards often are high while skills in meeting them run quite low.<sup>7</sup> Their tendency is to talk to and for their listeners rather than *with* them. These conditions, of course, simply would not exist if they did not meet with public expectation and desire.

The general attitudes of American adults toward the goals of education seem to be as follows:

1. The fundamentals upon which intelligent people agree should be taught.
2. Education should be practical and broadening.
3. Too much contact with ideas is unsuited to a world of reality.
4. The attitudes and beliefs of the parents should not be disturbed.

In essence, we appear to want our youngsters taught in school only that which they already have been trained to accept within the home.

<sup>7</sup> N. Fenton, *Mental Health in School Practice*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1943; J. Kimber, Interests and personality traits of Bible Institute students, *J. Soc. Psychol.*, 1947, 26: 225-233.

Inconsistency is not limited to the home and school. It can be found in industry as well. Here is an example: A division manager was complaining somewhat bitterly about being "second guessed" by the home office. He said that he didn't know what to do, that he was told he had a free hand, that the company was completely decentralized and that he was solely responsible for the success or failure of his local operations. However, he also was strongly criticized if mistakes were made, if he tried to vary what had become "standard practice," if his ideas conflicted with those of top management, and, in general, if he did anything differently from the way it always had been done. He said: "I'm in the same spot as the teenager who asks to go to the beach and is told: 'Sure, go right ahead. Have fun, swim all you like—just don't get wet!' "

If education is failing in the task set for it, it is not so much the fault of the system as it is of us who insist that the system be maintained. As elsewhere in life, we fear change and we refuse to face the fact that life is meaningful only in so far as it permits for growth. We do not see the intimate relation between changelessness and death. Rigid institutions breed rigid individuals and the vicious circle previously discussed applies. Even within the prescribed conditions that exist, the teacher can do much toward making his teaching more effective if he has the energy and the courage to try.<sup>8</sup>

If we can agree that thinking is most effective when it is based upon knowledge and that what we call "good judgment" is a function of knowledge *and* experience, then we have an obligation to insist that the knowledge and the experience be efficiently given. Since we also should know that learning is most effective when the learner actively participates in the task, we simply should not be content with the human phonographs that frequent the teaching profession. Once young people are given a chance to "learn by doing," the speed and efficiency of their learning are amazing. Of course, when a teacher permits freedom of thought in his students, he runs the risk of encountering minds superior to his own. This is why, if teaching is to be really effective, there is no room for the sensitive ego in it.

<sup>8</sup> L. Cole, *The Background for College Teaching*, New York, Rinehart, 1940; R. Kuhlen, and G. Thompson (eds.), *Human Development*, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1952, Section XII.

At a recent faculty meeting in a university of excellent repute, an organized effort was made to bolster student enrollment in the Science courses. The department heads of all the Sciences formed a solid block of demand. Their insistence was that: "The University always has had an excellent reputation for the quality of its courses in science and it is a shame to have this reputation destroyed." Their solution: *each entering student must take two years of science as a prerequisite for graduation*. Furthermore, this academic anachronism was passed by the assembled faculty and now is an active part of university policy! As you might expect, blank silence followed the question that one member raised. He asked: "If we are really concerned about fading enrollment in our science courses, shouldn't we try to increase our teaching effectiveness rather than to force students into these areas?"

A Ph.D. in no way whatsoever guarantees new brain control.

### **THE CHURCH**

The church, too, has stood steadfast with its eyes tightly shut. No other one of our social institutions has been so adamantly resistant to change. In typically human fashion however, the church has cried loudly about its loss of position in the lives of men, looking for the fault everywhere except within itself. It has searched diligently for beams with blind disregard for motes. As with the home and the school, so too with the church—fault lies not in the institution itself but within the human beings who compose it. The average parent but meets the expectations publicly erected for him while the teacher and preacher likewise are bound by socially expected behavior. Within this social expectancy, everyone is safe; getting outside of it can work hardship. It is no more than fair to say that whatever blame may be placed on the heads of parent, teacher, and preacher, must in large measure be shared by each and every one of us. It is we, you and I, who in the final analysis insist upon the maintenance of things as they are.

Nevertheless, we did not exclude the home and the school and we shall make no exception with the church. It has long insisted that truth is absolute, given once and forever. Its approach has been a dogmatic authoritarianism. It has tolerated no deviation from its prescribed principles and has permitted

relatively little discussion that was not aimed essentially at reaffirmation of the faith. Some day, the religious fundamentalist will receive the same shock recently experienced by the fundamentalist in Physics when the concepts of nuclear energy emerged. These *forced* him to restructure his absolutes, i.e., the unity and constancy of his elements.

Within the church a small but hard-working minority is struggling toward a relative and developmental concept of truth. Unfortunately, old things, and particularly old religious things, die very hard. Consequently, religious education within the church has been, and largely is, in the hands of those who live in the happy haze of days long gone. To them, change is the devil's handiwork; they insist not upon understanding but upon blind acceptance; they orate loudly against "contamination."

Despite a relatively recent increase (we shall discuss this and its reasons later), Sunday School attendance has dropped off tremendously during the current century. This is not hard to understand when we realize that there is no relationship between such attendance and moral conduct, that historical fact and Biblical teaching commonly are antithetical, and that there is little relationship between the "good life" as it is preached and as it is practiced. What is difficult to understand is the insistence by church educators upon a literal orthodoxy.<sup>9</sup>

There is a strong probability that church authorities would agree that: "Whatever promotes growth is good; whatever obstructs it is bad." However, the agreement would be equally great that true growth can occur only in one direction—toward the faith of our fathers.

With this, we would have no particular quarrel except that we would insist upon flexibility rather than rigidity in the growth process. We hasten to point out that it was under the direction of just this "faith" that Socrates was executed, Christ was crucified, Descartes forced to burn his manuscripts, "heretics" burned by the Inquisition, mothers denied chloroform during childbirth, children denied vaccination for small-

<sup>9</sup> C. Mochlman, *The Church as Educator*, New York, Hinds, Hayden and Eldredge, 1947.

pox, the teaching of evolution forbidden, the myth of insanity as a punishment for sin maintained, and racial segregation justified. The "wisdom of the ages" has been stubbornly supported, but with no consideration given to the conditions under which, the reasons for which, and the men by whom such "wisdom" was compiled. When a creature is incapable of thinking for itself, it perhaps must be taught to obey blindly. Does the church feel that, today, man is incapable of thinking for himself? If it does not, then its insistence that religious authority alone is competent to reason for man in the area of Ultimate Things approaches sheer insult.

Even when the archaic body is clothed in modern fabrics, the old concepts are but poorly concealed. In this guise, "original sin" (a mystical force toward evil implicit in the nature of man) is described as a form of "anxiety." The happy little assumption seems to be that if we change the label, the prescription automatically becomes more palatable. While words unquestionably are effective, they hardly work magic. Furthermore, when these authorities assume that the presence of feelings of "sinfulness" in anxiety states indicates that "sin" is therefore already in the world, they ignore the facts of the development of this neurotic pattern. The same argument can be used to "prove" that the unicorn of the ancients is but the rhinoceros of today. Actually, the two have very little in common, as a comparison of medieval drawings and modern photographs quickly reveal. Similarly, sin and anxiety are undesirable, but how much identity is demonstrated merely by labeling one as the other?

If we grant that: "Anxiety is the external precondition to sin,"<sup>10</sup> it follows that a reduction in anxiety should be accompanied by a reduction in sin. If anxiety largely is removed from a person then too, he should be largely free from sin. This becomes difficult to accept if sin actually is "a force toward evil *inherent* in the nature of man." If sin is a part of man's *nature*, how may he ever be free of it? Yet, anxiety feelings are reduced

<sup>10</sup> R. Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, New York, Scribner, 1941, vol. I, p. 200; see also, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, New York, Scribner, 1943, vol. II.

and sometimes removed during psychotherapy. It would seem that either anxiety and sin have no necessary connection or, more plausibly, that anxiety is a factor in maladjustment while sin remains a verbal construct devised by ancient speculators to describe that which they could not understand.

Yet more confusing, when examined thoughtfully, is the insistence that faith alone is essential for salvation; that works, although desirable, are not necessary. Descartes, looking apprehensively at this doctrine, cautioned against the carrying over into daily behavior any of the philosophical questioning permissible in his study. This places anyone who is curious in a most peculiar position; he may have a questioning *attitude*, but he must *do* nothing about it. This is a highly sophisticated technique for maintaining the status quo and also a functional one, because it certainly has worked. Its true purpose, to keep things as they are, seldom seems to have been suspected despite the verbal magic that it employs. (Maybe this is why the verbal is magic!) Furthermore, some such play on words was highly effective in permitting the church to make peace with its conscience in Germany during the 30's. It was equally successful in reconciling two quite different social attitudes in the United States from 1861 to 1865. You see, so long as faith alone is essential to salvation, casuistry is endless.

There is another facet to this situation. Action in controversial areas can be exceedingly dangerous to the actor. Socrates was accused of corrupting Athenian youth, Jesus of plotting against the state, Luther of advocating a life of brutality and lawlessness. Once they had been condemned for criticism, "evidence" was searched for and, since guilt was presumed, readily found. It has been, and it remains true, that those who question popular belief run greater risk than those who openly violate the legal code. We revere courage of conviction only when it centers about a familiar and *acceptable* principle. When it does not do so, we cry: "Heresy!"

Early in medieval times, the reason of Aristotle was replaced by the faith of Augustine. In this shift, the church played the major role. Since it is so much easier to feel than it is to think, this shift in the direction of man's behavior has continued right

down to the present. Although we laugh today at the phoenix, griffin, hippogriff, and other medieval fantasies, we accept quite uncritically the equally fantastic beliefs of the nature of man described by the medieval scholar. It should be recognized that medieval philosophy and medieval thinking were grounded in authoritarianism. Skepticism was brutally repressed and "truth" was to be found only in acceptable revelation and dogma. This reliance upon authority is characteristic of primitive peoples. It is easy and, so long as authority prevails, it is safe. We have seen that the tendency to follow lines of least resistance is a characteristic of behavior in lower animal *and* in man. It also is an old-brain function. Therefore, it fits nicely with the concept of man as an emotional animal but not at all with the concept of man as a rational being. It becomes quite understandable why authority and the status quo are synonymous. The "Christian Epic" with its antiquated interpretation of man's origin, nature, and fate has been more responsible than any other agency for the "Tyranny of the Past."

### **THE CHALLENGE**

Would it not be more desirable for the home, school, and church to examine their practices in the light of the facts of the present and the hopes for the future? In view of such examination, that which clearly is untrue could be cast out and that which remains applicable could be reworked and adapted to things as they are. Then man's understanding of himself would be less clouded by the current confusion he now finds whenever he tries to look. All three institutions could drop whatever the examination now shows to be delusion, however large its role in the past, and set themselves to accepting man as he is. They then could align their efforts with the facts of human nature as we know them to be rather than dolefully to declaim about man as they feel he *should* be. All things change or die and neither the home, the school, nor the church can hope to escape this law—however loudly they may protest against it.



The immediate task for the home, of course, is to train its young to, in their turn, become efficient parents. In this endeavor, the school and the church could render invaluable aid if they would. The vicious circle of parent-child-to-future-parent maladjustment could be broken, although this will be no easy task. Let us begin by training children to understand and to accept man *as he is*; let us forego ancient and speculative myth about the nature of man; let us begin to meet the problems of life on a realistic and factual level; let us do away with wish and get down to actual life situations. We can do this and we must do this if we really want to achieve the adjustment and happiness we talk so much about.

The challenge in this is the necessity for home, school, and church to change their attitudes. They must shift from their regard of man in terms of traditional belief to one based upon facts of accumulated knowledge. In this light, as we shall see, sex becomes as natural a thing as eating or breathing, marriages can be based upon the known facts of interpersonal adjustment, vocations can be aligned with basic abilities, religion can become a functional way of living, and old age can be adapted to as an active and inevitable maturity. Man, himself, appears in new and more accurate light. He is seen as a striving organism that learned to talk and immediately began to mistake his *words* for actualities. Consequently, when he became confused, he had but to coin a *name* for the source of the confusion and at once he understood it all, or, likewise through this naming process, he convinced himself that he was unable to understand and therefore removed his need to think any farther.

We shall treat the main problems of life (sex, marriage, vocation, religion, and old age) as false problems. We shall show that they have been given "problem" status because we consistently have refused to think about them in any realistic manner. We shall see that in each and every one of these life areas it is possible, right now, to apply factual information and when facts are so applied, to develop more effective personal adjustment.

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## 8. SANITY IN SEX

Spirits when they please can  
either sex assume, or both.  
—Milton, *Paradise Lost*

THROUGHOUT OUR DISCUSSION OF MAN AND HIS NATURE, we have stressed the importance of parental attitude and training for the life adjustment of the child. Nowhere are these parental attitudes more important than in the development of the child's personal reaction to sex and its allied factors. The sex training that a parent was or was not given, his own reactions to marriage, and the family life directly will influence the understanding he gives to his children. We humans tend to pass on to our children, with relatively little change, the same kinds of experiences we, ourselves, have been given. Thus, although the pampered child may develop into a sulky, dependent adult, he in turn tends to overindulge his children. Similarly, the person who now rebels against authority, because of oppressive parental treatment, will himself tend to be dominant and authoritative toward his own youngsters. So it goes. Each parent passes on, as a kind of cultural heritage, those training devices that were applied to him. The importance of this sequence in behavior should be obvious for the so-called "sex problem." In any case, it is vital that we recognize that children will reflect, almost in mirrorlike fashion, the attitudes and beliefs of their parents.

One of the first steps we must take in our development of a realistic attitude toward the word *sex* will be to understand the term clearly without dragging in the many value judgments that have been assigned to it. We shall attempt to unearth the *facts* of sex, leaving all of the "should be's" and "how awful's" to those who enjoy titillating their imaginations.

First of all, we must realize that originally the word sex implied a biological urge that guaranteed the perpetuation of the species. As seems to be true of all biological drives, sex activity is an old-brain function devised by an ingenious nature to assure through pleasurable behavior that a particular life-form will be continued. By making the procreative act pleasantly *sensuous*, nature obtained the promise that the organism would continue its kind on earth. However, a modern-day viewing of sex from so narrow a perspective would be completely unfair to what the term has come to mean. Such an attitude is anachronistic and characterized by the rigidity of old-brain functions. The biological act of intercourse certainly is the *pièce de résistance*, but no longer constitutes the entire meal.

### **HUNGER AND APPETITE**

Let us illustrate. In the beginning, eating was a process engaged in only when the organism was hungry. Eating also was one of nature's ways of assuring the integrity of the body. At the present, however, we need not be actually *hungry* in order to eat. For most of us, as the dietitians insist, the word "appetite" has replaced "hunger" as a description of why we gather about the table. Appetite is a kind of trained or learned hunger. As a consequence of it, we no longer "hunger" for food in general but for a food in particular, as example, pie, cake, or thick, juicy steak. We describe this shift from natural to developed behavior when we say: "I'm hungry for sea food." Hunger, as a biological drive, has been extended through social living into areas not originally involved. Eating has come to mean much more than the mere reduction of hunger pangs. We now eat as much in terms of the time of day as in terms of physiological need. If you think for just a moment, you will realize how far we have removed ourselves from eating as a culmination of the biological hunger *drive*. What is more, the eating process now involves certain places as well as certain times, certain accessory implements, and certain mannerisms.

Secondary meanings have become attached to the process of eating until the act essentially is stereotyped within social custom. Values beyond the mere obtaining of body nutriment have become associated with eating. Eating now may mean relaxation, good company, pleasant conversation, escape from home cooking and the inevitable washing of dishes as well as "appetizing" food efficiently served. Since in our culture, most of us actually *overeate*, the biological need for the feeding process has become completely submerged within the social attributes that have grown around it.

In very much the same manner, sex has come to mean far more than the act of procreation. Around the sex act as such has centered auxiliary attributes such as the sharing of interests, joys, responsibilities, and hardships. Factors of companionship and home life have gotten involved. Sex now has come to mean human fulfillment, a family, self-actualization, and love. It means mutual support and assistance, it means that no one can be completely sufficient unto himself, it means much, much more than: "It is better to marry than to burn." With sex as with hunger, original intents almost have been replaced by secondary values of a social rather than a biological nature. This extension has brought about tremendous changes in our *behavior* toward these basic biological functions. Unfortunately, many of us have made no corresponding changes in our *attitudes*.

For altogether too many of us, sex is a dirty word. It is a topic not to be discussed by "nice" people. In fact, some would have it *verboten* even in the privacy of thought. While "The Late George Apley" was wrong when he said that sex was a lot of nonsense, nevertheless there is a lot of nonsense about sex. In our treatment, we shall strive to replace the nonsense with facts.

### SEX FACT AND SEX FICTION

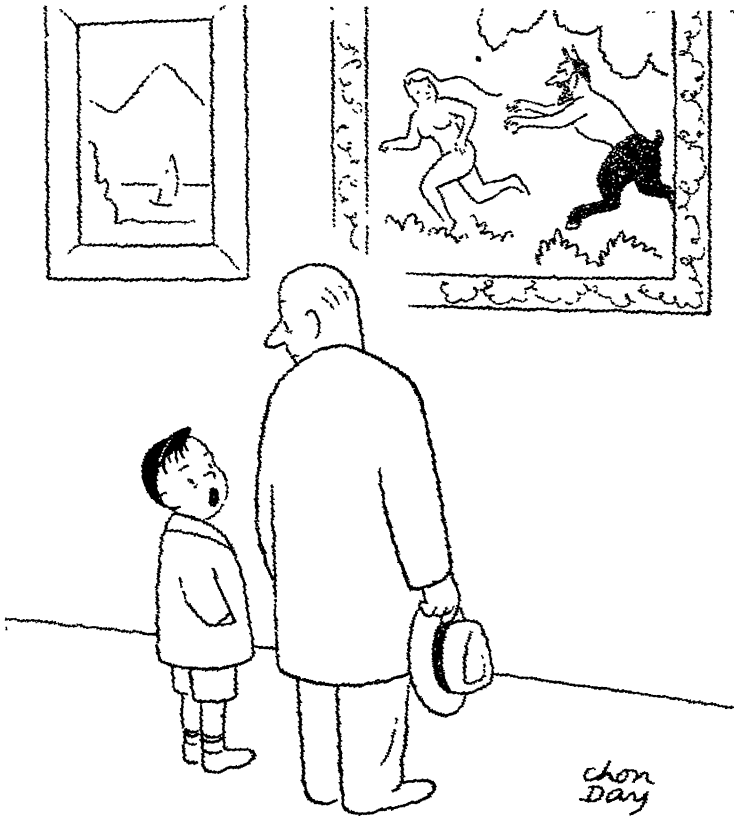
Sex is neither beautiful nor horrid. It is a natural and normal bodily function that has been badly distorted by the advocates of the school of beauty as well as by those of the

school of fear. It is perhaps a stupid analogy, but hunger has not broadly been propagandized as either a process to be adored nor yet one to be feared. Of course, our culture does not regard hunger and its consequent eating as a taboo. All of us know that so long as anything may be openly discussed, there is not much mystery to it. However, we also know that if any concept is surrounded by prohibitions, everyone immediately is consumed with a need to find out about it. It is the mysteries in life that get us into trouble; the things we understand seldom stimulate us to "great experiments."

It is a characteristic of man that when he is denied intellectual access to a concept, he sets about to invent explanations for it. It is axiomatic that when we have no facts, we can but follow our feelings. Consequently, when factual information is not available, plausibility alone becomes synonymous with truth. If information about sex has been repressed, we should not be surprised that a great deal of nonsense has been distributed under the guise of truth. Probably more misinformation and sheer superstition has surrounded sex than any other human operation. Much of this arose around 400 A.D. when St. Augustine proposed sex as a degradation of man. Why he then felt as he did, we shall leave to the psychoanalysts to determine but his own personal experiences with the gay set in Rome and Carthage before he was converted doubtless played a significant role. In any case, his viewpoint (even though born in regret) has influenced our thinking strongly and, unfortunately, still does. The "dead hand of the past" still weighs heavily upon us.

When we humans believe a thing to be true, we behave as though it actually were true. It thus becomes possible for us to live in terms of a lie. If our own sex training has been inadequate, we can but try to sort out from our welter of misinformation that which seems plausible to us. We then accept these concepts as gospel. Transmitted to our children, they but add to the general confusion—and possibly to our own embarrassment.

Other than to titillate curiosity, taboo *as such* may have relatively little significance. However, when efforts are made to repress and even to prevent the development of a normal



"All right, Pop, double-talk your way out of this one."

FIGURE 15. Reproduced by permission of the artist, Chon Day.

bodily function, only trouble can result. The auxiliaries verbally added to the sex taboo are precisely as *logical* as would be an effort to deny hunger by labeling it "nasty" and depriving the person of food. (Of course, you will ultimately win this latter gambit because after thirty days more or less, your subject will be dead.)

The sex drive is a deep-seated insistence within the body of all animal life. It will, and it should, develop within each one

of us as we mature regardless of what we may say about it. When we therefore teach that sex is dirty, wicked, brutish, and not to be discussed, we deliberately prepare the person for potential conflict. Inevitably, he will be caught between an emerging sex desire and his belief that the accompanying feelings are base and unworthy of him. Should you then be surprised that he is confused and that he even may experiment in an effort to remove the confusion? You know by now that conflict is the cloth from which anxiety is made. Would it seem strange if abnormal reactions should emerge as a result of internal stresses between feelings and conscience? The very least damaging consequence can be a morbid preoccupation with his "problem." How you want him to behave largely is up to you. If you want his behavior to be realistic in direction then, for heaven's sake, get your own facts straight!

Any of us who may work with youth and the problems youth gets involved in can tell of experiences that would be ludicrous were they not so vital to the person. It is a fact that the greatest known cause of sexual abnormality is found within faulty sex education. More than 40,000 sex offenders appear in our courts each year. Certainly as many more are "hushed up." Commonly, such offenders have grown up in the conviction that the sex aspects of his body and in his feelings are "bad." It is perhaps unfortunate that the person rather than the home gets punished. In any case, punishment for these offenses is very much like clipping the foliage from a plant and thereby assuming that you also have destroyed the root mass below.

Modern "St. Augustines" continue the tradition that there is something inherently evil in sex. This evil, we are told, pervades man's nature and sex is held to be an integral part of "original sin." This kind of thinking makes it possible for them to treat sex as a cause for social regulation rather than a consequence of it. Such devotees to armchair speculation insist that the making public of the functions of sex can do nothing but aggravate man's present difficulties.<sup>1</sup>

A concept like this simply opposes what we know about sex

<sup>1</sup>R. Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, vol. 1, New York, Scribner, 1941, p. 235.



and its life function. It serves as excellent evidence for the statement that when facts are unknown or ignored, plausibility equals truth. Actually, it is difficult to understand what can be gained through insisting upon the old secrecy and shame. It is *not* a fact that sex is an all-pervasive force within human nature and that therefore it must be rigidly curbed. Its problem status clearly arises out of social repression and not out of any utterly demanding pressures within it. In our culture, at least, starving men dream not of women, but of steaks! Furthermore, the lowly rat subordinates sex to both hunger and the need to care for its young.

One would think that even "pure reason" would be sympathetic to the conclusion that while the raw materials of sex are provided by biology, the way these raw materials are expressed in behavior is a function of social expectation *and* the kind of training given. At least, it is certain that human sex behavior can be understood only when it is seen as an aspect of individual personality that reflects cultural demands.<sup>2</sup> It would follow that if we want the behavior right, let us make sure our cultural demands are based on fact, not myth.

### SEX EDUCATION

In general, the home does an exceedingly sloppy job in sex education. Study after study show that age-mates are a much greater source for sex information than parents. As a matter of practice, parents shy away from the task largely because of their own uncertainties and ignorance. They also seem to feel that if they ignore the problem, it will go away. It is small wonder that sex gets a bad name; we force it to spend so much of its time on the corner and in the alley.

In a survey made by the author, 100 college men and 140 college women were asked, anonymously, to indicate the age at which they first received information about the real nature of human reproduction, what the source of this information

<sup>2</sup> C. Ford, and F. Beach, *Patterns of Sexual Behavior*, New York, Harper, 1949; G. Seward, *Sex and the Social Order*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1946.

had been, and what their reaction was to it. The results of this survey appear below.

FIRST COMPLETE INFORMATION ON SEX  
AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS

	<i>Boys</i>	<i>Girls</i>
Age range of first information	5-18	5-18
Age range within which $\frac{2}{3}$ of the group were told	7-13	9-14
Sources		
Age-mates	73%	49%
Parents	20%	38%
Other adults	5%	7%
Books, reading	2%	6%
Reactions		
Interest and curiosity	41%	24%
Surprise	11%	23%
Matter-of-fact acceptance	23%	17%
Fear, disgust, repulsion	7%	15%
Shock	2%	10%
Disbelief	11%	9%
Confusion, embarrassment	5%	2%

We first of all should point out that the mere fact such data are obtainable is a commentary upon our sex training practices. Suppose the survey had centered about hunger and the processes of digestion? Would these students have been able to pinpoint their introduction as readily? The facts are that students between the ages of eighteen and twenty-six not only could recall when they were told about sex, but also under what conditions and what their general feelings were at the time. This fact alone is enough to indicate the hesitancy and embarrassment with which we surround the issue. You see, emotional experiences always are more readily remembered than nonemotional ones.

In this inquiry, student reactions ranged from a normal: "I can't remember being told although it probably was between five and six. My questions were answered so completely that I was no longer interested," to "I was sixteen before I knew what the story was and then I got it from some older boys. I was shocked and confused because the topic never had been mentioned at home. Even today (I am twenty-two), my parents have not said a word about it in my presence."

This study showed that it was typical for the young person to display no particular excitement when the sex story was unfolded gradually and in a matter-of-fact way. Characteristic also was the embarrassment, repulsion, and disgust of those for whom the revelation came suddenly and commonly under somewhat emotionalized conditions.

It is significant that the boys in our study were told about sex at an earlier age than were the girls. This is a reversal of the way it should be. Biologically, girls mature more rapidly than do boys and therefore a girl *should* be given sex information at a somewhat earlier age than a male child. In general, girls mature between the ages of nine and eighteen while the usual range for boys is between eleven and eighteen. It follows that if sex information is to be given at all, it should be given by the time a girl is nine or a boy eleven. The observant parent will be able to adapt this "rule" to whatever precociousness may be apparent. Young people, after discovering the facts of sex from age-mates, often wonder why their parents had not disclosed them.

Individual differences within our group of college students are interesting. One girl reported that she had "learned" about sex from a radio program, while another said that a movie had enlightened her. Two boys, both in their late teens, discovered sex through seduction by an older woman. Six of the boys and sixteen of the girls were fifteen or older before they understood the story of human reproduction. Two of these six girls were told for the first time at age eighteen by their roommates during their freshman year at college. We would agree, I believe, that things like this just should not happen to our young people. That they do means only that many parents, perhaps most, shirk a duty and, by doing so, deliberately make life more difficult for their children. Behind this failure of parents to meet responsibility lies their infantile and emotionalized attitudes toward a natural and normal bodily function.

In large measure, the home evades an important duty. While this evasion *may* not be deliberate or intentional, nevertheless, it is a definite reflection upon the rationality of man.

However much we adults may know and however much we may want to do the right thing, we still often find expression difficult because of our own emotionally charged attitudes. We "know" that sex is a normal thing, but we remain hesitant and embarrassed about discussing it. Consequently, we postpone talking about it and usually are quite relieved when we discover that Joan or John has found out about life elsewhere. The fact that this "elsewhere-acquired" information may be luridly colored and highly erroneous seems not to trouble us a bit. We often feel that full duty has been done when our awkward approach to an explanation of sex brings an: "Oh, *that!*" from the youngster. Because the youth recognizes the issue, we assume that he knows about it. All of us "recognize" the fact of nuclear energy; how much do we *know* about it? Actually, we should make certain that the information is clear and comprehended; we can and we should exorcise the ghouls of ignorance that commonly surround sex. Whatever you do to remove the guilt and shame feelings that so often center about sex matters will be a vital and important contribution to the general health of our young people.

Sex education often is smeared by mud slings of "evil," "sinful," and "tawdry." Because of this, sex seems to fall under a classification of "things better left unsaid." Perhaps as compensation for these stupidities, we have developed a myth of marriage. In terms of this myth, marriage is presented as a moonlit and rose-scented existence where trouble disappears in the magic of marital bliss.

The facts are, as any married person knows, that marriage is closer to dishes and diapers than to starlight and wisteria. There are bills to be met, clothes to be bought, educations to be planned for, homes to be furnished, and a host of other down-to-earth problems. It takes hard and enduring work to solve these issues; fairy godmothers and glass slippers play an exceedingly minor role. Our attitudes toward marriage often are as unrealistic as our attitudes toward sex. However, their bases differ. Attitudes toward sex commonly are based on fear, those toward marriage on sentimentality. Neither fear nor

sentiment are evils and both have a functional role in our lives, but we humans seem driven to go to extremes. We simply refuse to recognize that many things may be tonics in grains but poisons in ounces.

### **SEX ACCEPTANCE**

If we are going to be rational about sex, we must not only recognize that sex is a natural factor in our lives but we must also be willing to accept and to act upon this factor of naturalness. Since the most effective method in child guidance is the example set, it is essential that we accept sex as an aspect of good adjustment. It is an aspect, no different from any other, toward which a healthy outlook is the first step in the effective dealing with it. If guidance intelligently is given, sex becomes a way of happiness and a constructive force in life. Furthermore, just as we must try to remove the mystery that traditionally has surrounded sex, so too must we recognize that sex, as a bodily drive, is no more vital than other bodily urges. Since sex factors commonly are found in the life histories of poorly adjusted persons, it has been assumed that these factors play an equally important role in all adjustment. This is an assumption that objective examination fails to support. The original assumption was based on a small, restricted sample of the human realm and reflected an expectation of the investigator rather than a human characteristic.

We have seen how easy it is to read into human behavior what we *wish* to find there. Through this projective mechanism, the person who would repress sex in man, because of its "sinfulness," sees evidence of sin all about him. Similarly, the person who is steeped in Freudian theory reads evidence for his assumptions into every human act. Sex *may* be basic in a particular behavior abnormality but so too may any other biological need. Which body drive may be overemphasized in a given pattern of maladjustment is a function of a highly complex series of factors, and tremendous individual differences are found to exist. While sex can be the root from which

pathological behavior grows, it is but one of many such sources and certainly should not be considered as *the* dominating force in life.

In any case, self-control is more effective than external regulation. Genuine control of the self comes only through realistic understanding of our own make-up. If we are to meet ourselves on a plane of such understanding, we can do it only by a complete and honest appraisal of our nature. First of all, we must grant sex a place among the normal and basic aspects of life. We must rid ourselves of notions that sex is either evil or all important. Having done these things, we now can admit that it is a typically human function that must be understood to be controlled. When this is done, morality in sex can be regarded just as may morality in diet. Seen in this light, we can say about sex as we can say about eating—what is good for the body is desirable; what is bad for the body is undesirable. When our own outlook is open and free, then we may set an example from which children can profit.

### **PERSPECTIVE**

If past experience has any predictive value, we know that understanding and tolerance arise out of perspective. About the first thing we humans do is to look for historical information when we are faced with an unfamiliar problem. Whether on the job or in school, we first try to find out how this issue has been dealt with by those who have encountered it previously to us. This enables us to view the problem from a broader perspective than is possible when we look only from our own particular frame of reference. Consequently, if our view of sex is to be objectively seen, we must not use our own culture as our only reference. We must look to see how other cultural groups have met and resolved the issue.

Ventures such as these can be humbling experiences. We often discover that so-called “primitive” people have solved problems that continue to baffle us. If the standard of the good life is one that makes for more effective adjustment to its problems, then cultural perspective on the issues involved

raises serious questions about the inevitableness and rightness of our way of doing things. Only those who blindly refuse to look beyond the values of their own group possibly can assert that their way and their way alone is "right." The last war taught us some of the fallacies inherent in political isolationism. We can only hope that it will not be necessary that international catastrophe should occur in order that we may learn the fallacy of social isolationism.

Individuals and cultures have certain things in common. When the person insists upon meeting life's problems with but one method of approach, he almost guarantees his breakdown whenever his one way fails. So too with the society that insists that its ways and only its ways must forever be correct. So long as the individual or cultural *way* of life is successful, a growing complacency develops. Guards drop and defenses weaken. When emergency arises, panic ensues and the structure fractures. The cultures of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome attest to this truth. Culture, like people, may either grow or decay; a status quo cannot forever be maintained. Furthermore, when the human mind searches for perspective upon a problem, it must stay alert to the maxim: "No ideal is quite so good as a fact!"

With as few value judgments as possible, let us examine the role played by society in sexual behavior. One conclusion will present itself to us immediately. We quickly will discover that while the raw material of sex is biologically given, the form of expression that sex may assume is determined by the customs of the group and the consequent training given the person.

### **VARIATIONS IN SEXUAL PATTERNS**

It may be well to examine these variations in sexual patterns against the backdrop of our own beliefs. Although the evidence is largely to the contrary, traditionally we have defined rather definite characteristics of masculinity and femininity in our society. That is, there are certain personality traits which are assumed to be male and female prerogatives, deviation from which brings prompt labels of "tomboy" or "sissy."

Probably because of woman's early position of socioeconomic inferiority in Christian societies, she has been, and largely still is, regarded as the "weaker vessel." Characteristic of this attitude are the facts that she was not accorded a "soul" until the middle of the first century, was regarded as "unclean" until the middle of the sixteenth, and has had equal voting rights with man for less than forty years. Traditionally, woman has been given a place in our society subordinate to man. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that at present most people believe that masculinity involves such behavior patterns as dominance, aggressiveness, rationality, provident behavior, and authority. Conversely, femininity is characterized by submission, passivity, emotionality, improvident behavior, and compassion. While these distinctions are typical of majority belief, the evidence is quite to the contrary.<sup>3</sup> However, even if within our society, males were "masculine" and females were "feminine," as they are believed to be, the behavior patterns which we attribute to each sex are not universal, as a brief examination of the "masculine" and "feminine" characteristics of other cultures will indicate. We shall see that no particular personality trait is inherent in the biology of sex.

One investigator was particularly interested in determining whether the supposed differences in temperament between the two sexes also could be found to exist between men and women who had been brought up in cultures different from our own.<sup>4</sup> She studied "sex differences" in three New Guinea tribes and found essentially that there was little in temperament that could reasonably be ascribed to the biological influence of sex. In one of these groups, the Arapesh, she found that what we would call "femininity" prevailed, in that both men and women were trained to be coöperative, unaggressive, and responsive to others. Sex was not a particularly driving force with either male or female. Both men and women displayed attitudes toward children and the home which we would term as "maternal," with both parents caring for the child in ways

<sup>3</sup> M. Montague, *The Natural Superiority of Women*, New York, Macmillan, 1953.

<sup>4</sup> M. Mead, *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*, New York, Morrow, 1935.



we would limit to the mother. Since these attitudes naturally were reflected in the children themselves, the Arapesh demonstrated behavior patterns which, in terms of our standards, would be essentially feminine. Children's games were non-competitive in nature, and personal aggression was not permitted. There was very little emphasis upon sex as such and physical sex differences were accepted as completely natural phenomena. Children of both sexes wore no clothes until they were five or six years old. With both sex and self deëmphasized, the Arapesh formed a society of friendly, coöperative, and secure individuals.

The second group studied, the Mundugumor, made a sharp contrast with the gentle Arapesh. In this harsh, hostile, and head-hunting culture, adults of both sexes were aggressive, ruthless, and accented a rugged individualism in which each person viewed his neighbor as a potential threat. Both men and women took a strong and active interest in sex behavior, regarding it with an aggressiveness characteristic of "masculinity" as we would view it. Both sexes were physically violent, quick to perceive and to avenge insult, and showed apparent delight in such "masculine" activities as feats of strength, strenuous action, and fighting.

From the time of birth, the Mundugumor child is trained to look upon life as a war of survival. He must, from the beginning, struggle for his existence, and he receives a minimum of attention. Suckling apparently is resented by the mother and the child is fed only when his uproar passes all tolerance and then is given food only for so long as he actively suckles. The instant he stops, the breast is withdrawn. Therefore, the child soon learns to feed in a highly aggressive manner, suckling vigorously and fiercely until satisfied. Weaning is accomplished through the medium of blows and scolding. Insecurity is rampant and is expressed by the vicious aggressiveness characteristic of both sexes. The culture is typified by the violent aggressiveness we would find only in a rather undisciplined male.

The third group was one in which the sex roles as we know them are reversed. These people, the Tchambuli, regard the

male as largely a "decorative" embellishment to the culture, while the female is the impersonal, managing, and directing member of the household. The social economy is dependent upon the providing activities of the woman, while the men engage in such pursuits as dancing, painting, and group meetings similar to our feminine "afternoon teas." Girl children are given training in the handicrafts necessary to support and maintain the family while the boys, left largely to their own pursuits, become emotionally dependent, shy, subservient, sensitive, and given to the petty bickerings and gossip commonly attributed to women in our group. Among the Tchambuli, it is the woman who develops self-assurance through being permitted self-expression, while the man, subordinated, manifests the behavior characteristics which we assume to be typical of femininity. Sex activity itself is "reversed," with the female doing the "courting" and initiating postmarital sex relations.

In the face of these observations, it is difficult indeed to subscribe to the doctrine of sex-linked differences in personality traits. Man and woman become what society dictates, and either "masculine" or "feminine" characteristics may be displayed equally well by either sex if the culture so insists. Consequently, what we consider to be "proper" behavior for male or female is "correct" only in a social sense; there is nothing inherent in femaleness that makes for coöperativeness or submission. We are the result of our training and become what society expects of us, as this expectation is interpreted within our homes. Thus, the attitudes we have toward sex and the importance it assumes in our life are a direct expression of the attitudes and training of the home within which we grow.

### **CULTURAL ATTITUDE**

That the cultural attitude toward sex may be reflected in the feelings and behavior of the individual can also be illustrated by descriptions of primitive societies. Groups in which sex is over-evaluated, condemned, and is simply a part

of life have been studied and the effects of these varying cultural norms upon the individual have been described.

Among the Marquesans, a central Pacific group, sex has great significance.<sup>5</sup> Because these people live on islands subject to periodic drought, food tends to be scarce and difficult to obtain. They are dependent almost entirely upon food from the sea and from such trees as are native to their region. When we add to the tensions produced by a hunger anxiety, the fact that men outnumber women more than two to one in the Marquesas, we can understand how sex might come to be "used" not only as a tension-relieving device but also as an economic product. The scarcity of women adds "value" to sex with the effect that she who is most adept in intercourse becomes the most desirable, while the male "strives to please." The society is polyandrous, each woman having two or three husbands whom she effectively controls through the threat of withholding sexual privileges. Such a utilization of sex as a social force leads to severe feelings of threat and insecurity in the adult males. Since the role of woman in this group is primarily sexual in nature, the care of the infant is assigned to the less important husbands. Consequently, the child develops in a masculine atmosphere of insecurity and tends to reflect these feelings in his own personality. Such feelings tend to increase as the child develops because, if the individual is a male, attitudes of worthlessness are forced upon him, while if the child is a female, she comes to regard existence itself as revolving about one biological function.

Among the Manus of New Guinea, sex is condemned.<sup>6</sup> The function is regarded as essentially sinful much as it was by our own Puritans. In fact, there is considerable similarity between the society of the Manus and our own. They, too, regard material possession as the yardstick by which success, attainment, and happiness are to be measured. However, they make use of marriage as an economic investment. Obviously, if

<sup>5</sup> R. Linton, "The Marquesans" in A. Kardiner, *The Individual and his Society*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1939.

<sup>6</sup> M. Mead, *Growing up in New Guinea*, New York, Morrow, 1930.

one invests his money in a product, he wishes to protect himself as best he may. Consequently, Manus marriages are arranged early in the lives of the participants by parents anxious to profit from the transaction. Until a marriageable age is attained by the betrothed children, it behooves the adults to make sure that their articles of trade are undamaged. They have developed toward this end religious beliefs in which the ancestors of the children keep close watch over them and violation of the sex code becomes not only an economic offense but a religious one as well. Under customs which make sex a process greatly to be avoided and feared, sexual activity becomes reduced to sheer physical relationships which involve nothing of tenderness or compassion. Viewed in this light, woman becomes a household drudge, fit only for kitchen work and childbearing. Characteristically, female Manus adolescents look forward to marriage with fear and dread, in anticipation of the humiliation of the sexual advances of the husband. The society is highly puritanical, with the males the dominating, superior, and aggressive beings, while the female is the frightened, frigid subordinate. The sharing of a lovelife is unknown. In Manus women, we may see similarities to our adults whose training has led them to regard sex as a fearful and horrid thing.

We have spoken before of the maternal attitude of the Arapesh male. This attitude is closely associated with the belief that children are "born" as much by the father as by the mother. Thus, after conception, the father must engage in sexual "work" since semen is regarded as essential for the proper growth of the embryo. The father also joins the mother in her convalescence, and in all ways actively assists in the development of the child.

The entire Arapesh culture revolves about the principle of growth placing all emphasis upon the development and maintenance of healthy bodies. Betrothal takes place at an early age, and the young girl goes to live with the little boy's people. There, the two grow up together, living as brother and sister during the years prior to their marriage. Consequently, ultimate sexual relations occur as a natural development of an

affection of long standing. It is primarily an extension of feelings already present and hence presents nothing of the traumatic experience that it is for the Manus woman or, upon occasion, that it is for women in our culture. Among the Arapesh, sex as such is but a process, similar in nature to feeding and therefore necessary for the development of healthy individuals. Consequently, it has little meaning in its own right.

From these studies, we are led to the conclusion that sex as a problem is culturally determined; that it may be a warping and fearful experience as among the Manus, that it may serve a compensatory, substitutive function as among the Marquesans, or that it may take its place in society as the servant of the more important principle of adequate growth, as among the Arapesh. Sex becomes largely what we make it and carries no inherent forcefulness of its own. It would seem clear that whatever attitude the individual in our culture may possess toward sex as well as the evaluation he places upon it is a direct outcome of the training he has received. The attitude of defeatism with regard to the sex "problem" characteristic of many American adults may be seen for what it is—a refusal to face the fact, combined with an emotional attempt to evade their own responsibilities. With regard to such sex training as we give, we are still, in large measure, operating under antiquated beliefs and factually unacceptable opinion. We have abundant evidence to indicate that, as example, "boys will be boys" only when they are trained to be so, in fact, what constitutes "boyishness" in itself is a cultural and not a biological product.

We have seen that knowledge of the individual's sex gives us but partial information concerning his personality and his feelings of relationship with others. Depending upon the cultural norms, a given person may develop so-called "masculine" or "feminine" traits regardless of his biological sex. In our culture, however, we have decided that the male should display a masculine aggressiveness, while the female should be femininely passive. We must realize that these behavior patterns are the product of our beliefs concerning the ways in

which members of a given sex *should* behave and that they are not at all intimately related either to maleness or to femaleness. The world of sex is not divided into sheer blacks and pure whites. Nature very rarely appears in a this *or* that fashion. It is the human mind that invents discrete categories and then forces natural facts into these artificial pigeonholes. Natural phenomena exist as continua, they shade gradually from one extreme into another, and the more quickly we can accept this fact as applying to human sexual behavior, the sooner will our understanding of it become realistically based.<sup>7</sup>

The facts are that sexual maleness and sexual femaleness are intimately related. This close identity can be seen in examination of hermaphrodites (individuals whose external genitals are so incompletely developed that their actual "sex" cannot readily be determined). It is often discovered that while a hermaphrodite possesses male sex glands, the external sex organs more closely resemble those of the female. Consequently, these persons may be reared as women. The results are quite interesting. Hermaphrodites having male sex glands but reared as females lived and behaved as females. They showed typical feminine sexual drives and behavior. Some of them had married and played the normal sex role culturally expected of them. When these individuals had been reared as males, they showed the sex urges and behavior characteristic of the man in our society.<sup>8</sup>

Evidence like this makes it just impossible to consider the human sex drive as being completely determined by the biological sex of the person. We are forced to the conclusion that the sex drive and its consequent behavior greatly may be modified by psychological and social pressures. The so-called "irrevocable differences" between the sexes become sheer artifacts of the human wish to categorize and classify. Sex differences largely are social in origin and sex behavior a direct function of training. "Christines" are probably quite common despite the fantastic publicity given to a recent

<sup>7</sup> A. Kinsey, W. Pomeroy, and C. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, Philadelphia, Saunders, 1948, p. 639.

<sup>8</sup> F. Slaughter, *Medicine for Moderns*, New York, Messner, 1947, p. 159.

demonstration of modern surgical techniques. Please do not be too confused. Boys and girls still exist and will continue to do so. The *vive la différence* of the storied Frenchman will maintain itself in our intersex relationships. We wish only to reduce the effect of a lot of traditional nonsense that has conditioned our thinking on matters of sex, and we have no intention whatsoever of removing sex from life—even if it were possible for us to do so.

### **REALISTIC UNDERSTANDING**

The subject of sex is an exceedingly easy one to talk about. We need only to tap in on almost any human discussion to discover this fact. However, relatively little, beyond vicarious thrill, is achieved by *talking* about issues. We learn by practice, not by talk. Therefore, let us look at what the authorities in child guidance have to say about sensible sex education. Keep in mind, however, that when all the listening to authorities has been done, it remains for the parent to set the right example if sex education is to have any real meaning for the child. Lecturing, preaching, and the best of oratory are quite useless by themselves. Unless parental words carry the conviction of parental practice, little will be achieved. Since, like it or not, parents *cannot help* but give sex education in one manner or another, surely it should be done sensibly and should be based on actual fact. Even though the parents may say nothing at all about the matter, the youngster will pick up negative impressions toward sex through the unspoken and evasive attitudes mother and father cannot help but display.

Punishing the child for displaying his normal curiosity about the sex organs can lead to fear and guilt feelings about the whole sex life. When he plays with his toes, we think it's cute; when he "plays with himself"—oh horror! Strict and severe toilet training also may induce negative feelings toward sex, because of the proximity of genital and excretory organs. Remember that the child is extremely sensitive to "minimal cues" and that he can sense how mother and father feel about things. Those parents for whom sex is a natural life experience

have a better chance of rearing well-adjusted children than do those for whom sex is a thing of darkness.

In the broad sense, sex education means far more than the mere description of the "facts of life." It should involve the whole scope of living with a member of the opposite sex. The old ways, centered in false modesty and undue concern, obviously have failed. Certainly new standards, based in realistic understanding, should be applied. The information leading to the development of such standards is available and has been so for some time. However, our usual tendency to do things as they always have been done, quite effectively has prevented application. Consequently, our present task largely is one of removing the "dead hand of the past" and of replacing its clamminess with the warmth of modern knowledge.

Authorities agree that the best place for sex education to be given is in the home. These authorities also agree that, in general, the home just does not get this job done. Therefore, they tell us, it is necessary for the school to take over. This may be a logical expedient but there remains no justifiable reason why such training should not be done at home. Sex education belongs in the home and actually is parental responsibility, akin to the developing of sphincter control (toilet training) or the learning of proper eating habits. Sex is an issue that parents seem to dodge and they dodge it because their own understanding and knowledge is so scanty. Consequently, these parents are relieved when the school offers to assume the responsibility for them.

Compromises are possible and workable. When the home and the school combine resources, results are laudable. Ideas grow out of group discussions and attitudes become functions of fact rather than feeling. Both parent and teacher share in a mutual task and both understand and accept the role of the other. A common purpose arises and common approaches are defined. Parent and teacher become a team, and the child undeniably benefits.

The Pittsburgh experiment shows how much can be done when real effort is expended. In this city, a course in sex education is offered by the health department to junior and senior high school students. Although this training well could be



given earlier in the school lives of the students, it remains a fine thing. The course is administered by specially trained teachers, who work with sexually segregated groups of students. The course concludes with a talk by a female physician to the girls and by a male physician to the boys. At the end of these final talks, each physician answers unsigned questions that the students have turned in. Throughout, the course material is frank and is honestly presented. Nearly all of the students' parents willingly consent to permitting their children to take it.<sup>9</sup> We suspect that most parents not only are willing but also are quite relieved.



"I reasoned with him about it, and he convinced me it was O.K."

FIGURE 16. From *The Saturday Evening Post*. Reproduced by permission of the artist, Glenn R. Bernhardt.

<sup>9</sup> A. Philips, *Helpful sex education success in schools here*, *Pitts. Sun-Telegraph*, January 13, 1947.

It is unfortunately true that if parents are to do the job of sex education that having children has assigned to them, they first must be *competent* to teach. The ability to conceive and bear children does not automatically carry this competence, although most parents appear to assume that it does. Furthermore, this competence involves much more than mere factual information of the biology of sex. Parents must become familiar with the psychological, social, and ethical implications if they are to do a real job. To many a parent, this appears as too great a demand and he does nothing as a consequence. He fails to recognize that we often find too burdensome the task we do not wish to face. So, our alibi is: "It's just too much work." Admittedly it is more difficult to think than it is to feel. Furthermore, the load is all the heavier when it must be carried in an area where emotion traditionally has ruled. Yet, if parents are to justify their existence as worthy of the children they have brought into the world, they must face and resolve this issue, however difficult it may be for them.

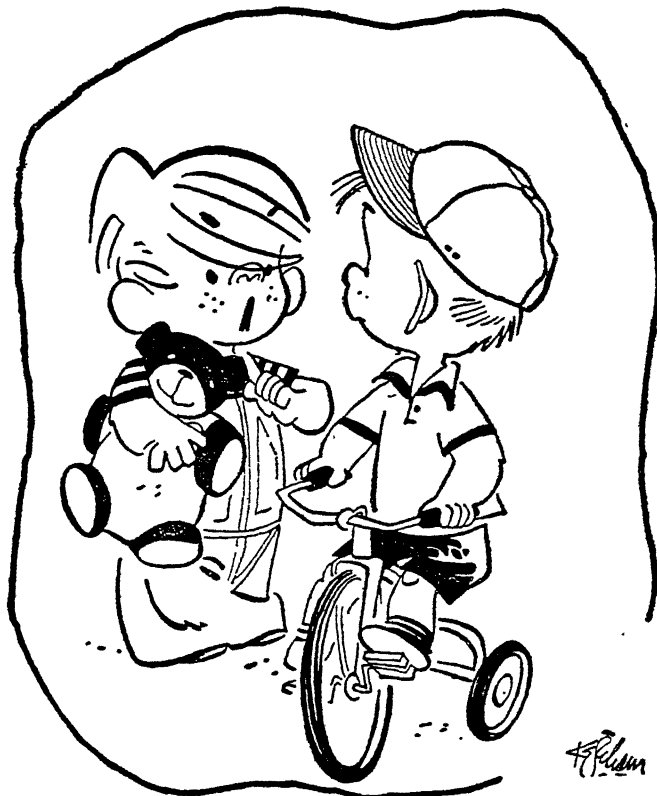
The primary task that faces the parent as he moves into this area is a reëducation of himself. He must stop emotionalizing about sex, put his new brain to work on the problem, and learn his job with no more emotional interference than he experiences when a new task is set for him in his work. On the distaff side (sex education usually becomes mother's job), the maternal parent must go about the task with no more emotionalizing than she had shown when teaching the child how to drink from a cup or to eat with a spoon. This can be done of course, but first of all mother must sell herself on the fact that she *can* do it. When she says that she cannot, she actually is saying that she is afraid to try; that she does not really *want to*. When we humans say that we cannot change our attitudes, beliefs, or ways of life, we are admitting that we simply prefer ourselves as we are.

### **PARENT RESPONSIBILITY**

A parent who is willing to assume his responsibility in this area and who has made an honest attempt to clear his mind of superstition can do many helpful things. However, there are

DENNIS THE MENACE

By HANK KETCHAM



"First it's under a cabbage leaf. Then the stork brings you  
... then you come in the doctor's black bag.  
You know what I think?"

FIGURE 17. Copyright, 1955, Post-Hall Syndicate. Reproduced by permission.

some prerequisites. He must first of all assure himself that he will *answer his child's questions honestly, completely, and in language simple enough that the child may be sure to understand.*

Keep well in mind that if you do not provide answers, someone else will, and this "someone else" may use the situation as a game in which the child's curiosity may be the butt of a stupid joke. Unfortunately, the child cannot discriminate between "fun" and fact and will therefore accept what he is told. If your child obtains a store of fantasy under the guise of sex information, you have only yourself to blame.

In answering the questions that your child may ask, an effective and accurate vocabulary is helpful. So also is the right kind of knowledge as well as advance information about what the child is likely to request. Furthermore, you must be able to talk in terms that the youngster readily can understand. This you can do if you will. Proficiency in communication always demands that the message be stated in the language of the listener. Remember also that direct and honest answers are the best antidote to curiosity.<sup>10</sup>

Curiosity about sex and its allied features may appear relatively early in a child's life. On the average, the first questions are asked between the ages of six and nine years. At these early ages, a brief, direct reply usually is enough. The question: "Where do babies come from?" can be handled with a straightforward: "From inside mother's body." If the child follows up with: "How did the baby get there?"—he usually will be content with: "Daddy planted a seed." In any case, answers must be given without an air of mystery or secrecy. The more simple, the more direct, and the more accurate your answers, the better. If these early questions are met squarely and honestly, the chances are strong that they will be fully acceptable. No more undue curiosity will be shown than to answers to queries like: "Why does the wind blow" or "Why do rabbits wiggle their noses?" Beware lengthy and involved discussions about birds and bees.

<sup>10</sup> F. Brown, and R. Kempton, *Sex Questions and Answers*, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1954; W. DeKok, *You and Your Child*, New York, Philadelphia Library, 1955; F. Strain, *Being Born*, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1954.

It is not necessary to wait until the child begins to ask questions in order to do a job of sex education. No harm will be done by "premature" explanation. Of course, the child may not understand clearly and may well bring up the issue again at a later date, but it is far better to instruct too early than too late. Whenever a child shows interest, however general, he is ready for his first lesson. If he indicates awareness of a birth in the family or in the neighborhood, instruction can be begun. Likewise, any expression of curiosity about physical differences between boys and girls indicates some readiness. There can be no fixed rule but the observant parent should be able to tell when his child is ready to learn. When this moment appears, move right in. Be simple and be accurate.

As early as possible, permit the child to associate with age-mates of both sexes. Developing the ability freely to mingle with members of the opposite sex is important and should be started as quickly as can be. Keep telling yourself until you believe it that nothing that can happen as the result of sex training for the development of effective heterosexual interests can be as damaging as the failure of such interests to develop at all, or to develop too late. Keep your progression of information smooth and keyed to your child's ability to understand. If you do this honestly and well, you will have done all that can be asked of the parent. You will have begun to meet your obligation to the future marital happiness of your child.

Along with the sex information that you provide, let your child watch the growth of plants and flowers from seed to full bloom. A grain of corn planted in a glass jar and visible from without may give you valuable leads to the timing of information. The opportunity to observe the preparation for motherhood of household pets can be most helpful whether these pets be mice, rats, dogs, cats, or whatever. These things will make it easier for your child to direct his questions to *you* and this he most certainly *should* do. *Your* ease in the situation will be a function of your own objectivity and freedom from conflict. Done well, your understanding attitude and your willingness to explain will get you his confidence. As a parent, is there any greater reward?

So far, our discussion has centered largely around the role of the mother in sex and childbearing. The probabilities are that your child will not ask about the role of the father until sometime after his initial questions. When he does ask, or even before if he seems ready, tell him that the father plays an equally important part. Tell him that most forms of life must have both a mother and a father. Let him know that the seed for babies, the sperm, is carried by father in a liquid called semen. This seed is deposited in the mother's body through the father's penis, an organ principally devised for this purpose. Within mother's body, there is a special cavity, the uterus, that carries and protects the developing baby as it grows. Tell him that just as the grain of corn had to have protection, good soil, sunlight, and similar conditions, so too the growing baby must have the best of care. Consequently, it is kept within mother's body until the baby is old and strong enough to live outside of it.<sup>11</sup> Within your judgment of your child's ability to understand, tell him about the development of human life. Go into whatever detail is necessary to meet his curiosity of the moment, but meet this curiosity *completely*. Be prepared for repeat performances as they may be indicated. Remember, *one* telling never is enough, whether we deal with child or adult.

In general, your child will ask questions that center about:

1. Where babies come from.
2. The arrival of another baby in the family.
3. How baby grows in mother's body.
4. How baby is born.
5. Sex organs and their functions.
6. Physical differences between boys and girls.
7. The role of the father in reproduction.
8. Relationships between marriage and baby's birth.

Within our culture, both male and female children reach a peak in sex play (and presumably interest) at an average age of eleven years. By this time, therefore, any child should have

<sup>11</sup> E. Leonard, L. Miles, and C. Vanderkar, *The Child at Home and at School*, New York, American Book Co., 1942, p. 178.

fairly complete sex knowledge. Certainly, no child should be permitted to enter puberty without adequate sex information. It is also of extreme importance that this knowledge should have been given gradually and tailored to meet the youngster's ability to comprehend. You will recall that with our sample of college students, a gradual, matter-of-fact disclosure was readily accepted; shock and emotion were evoked only when knowledge was obtained by a sudden exposé.

### **AUTOEROTIC PRACTICES**

Interest in sex play is accompanied by the discovery of pleasurable sensations that arise from manipulation of the genital organs. Traditionally, we have created tremendous tumult about these autoerotic (self-loving) practices. Masturbation has been assigned as a cause of disease, feeble-mindedness, insanity, and other afflictions whose real cause was unknown. We know now that masturbation as such is *not* a causal factor in any form of illness whatsoever. Despite this knowledge, altogether too many adults regard autoerotic behavior with fear and loathing; they seem to forget their own youthful experiences. Consequently, we hear such terms as "self-abuse," "solitary vice," and "secret sin." As a result of this common superstition, parents often become highly disturbed when they discover that *their* child masturbates. These feelings usually are a direct result of what they were told when their parents caught them!

It is a fact that masturbation *as such* has no harmful effects upon the organism. Despite this fact, many parents are frightened that the practice may make their child "foolish," and in their fright, resort to all kinds of threat and punishment. Historically, the use of fear as a means of controlling human behavior has been ineffective, and its application in this issue is equally futile. The probabilities are very strong that the youth will continue regardless of parental threats, except that he too will feel guilty and ashamed. About all that punishment achieves is to add an overburden of emotion to a

rather normal pattern of behavior. In this area, there is real need to replace emotionality with rational judgment and behavior.

In the first place, there can be no question about the universality of masturbation. The young in all societies engage in the practice, and so do most forms of subhuman life. On an average, three-quarters of all American male youths masturbate and some one-half of our young females also investigate the pleasures of autoerotic practice. While the odds are that these figures are on the low side, they are ample enough to indicate the generalness of the behavior. In terms of frequency of occurrence, we must admit that autoerotic behavior is normal behavior for the young in our culture. This becomes especially true when we recognize that the generality of the practice has been constant for at least the past fifty years.<sup>12</sup>

In dealing with the autoerotic practices of our youth, a present-day adult must beware of paying lip service to his *knowledge* while reacting to his *feelings*. It is difficult, of course, to keep personal feelings out of behavior but it is not an impossible task. Where masturbation is concerned, it is especially easy to talk about harmlessness yet at the same time to imply that, nevertheless, dire things may result. An illustration of what we mean follows:

Most of our youth masturbate. It is a usual and hence normal experience. In so far as present-day evidence can show, the practice itself is harmless and has no particularly detrimental effect upon later life. However, masturbation is common behavior among the schizophrenics in our mental hospitals!

If you cannot separate feeling and fact any more effectively than this, it is better that you say nothing at all.

So far, we have spoken mainly of the absence of any physiological consequences to masturbation. On the psychological side, the evidence is not so clearly cut. If to the frequency of occurrence aspect of normality, we add the concepts of personal advantage and personal disadvantage, we run into the role of

<sup>12</sup> A. Kinsey, W. Pomeroy, and C. Martin, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*, Philadelphia, Saunders, 1948; A. Kinsey, W. Pomeroy, C. Martin, and P. Gebhard, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*, Philadelphia, Saunders, 1953.



"attitude." Adding these other standards indicates that whether or not the practice can be called "normal" will be a function of the person's feelings about it. If the youth *regards* his autoerotic behavior as "sinful" or "dangerous," then the behavior is disadvantageous to him as a person and consequently must be classified as "abnormal." However, if the practice carries no particular overtones of guilt feeling, then its essential harmlessness comes to the front and we have little to worry about.

In the light of the usual parental reaction and of customary training given, the probabilities are that any given youth will feel guilty. The great majority of our young people report that they have been threatened with fearful aftermath and they half believe that these harmful effects may occur. Characteristically, as these young folk grow into adulthood, they carry along with them the guilt feelings aroused by the misinformation given to them as children. This is the damage masturbation does—and the only damage. The burden of guilt that a person may carry through his life, because he was fed superstition instead of facts, constitutes the only real harm that autoerotic practices may cause. Remember, this "damage" results not from masturbation itself, but from the stupidity with which we adults deal with it.

Throughout our whole discussion, we have seen that emotion, as a way of life, leads only into difficulties. It follows therefore that if man is the rational being he *says* that he is, he should regard this aspect of sexual behavior realistically and factually. So regarded, we immediately discover that masturbation is something of a cultural rather than a biological thing. If we think, we will realize that whenever a culture denies open expression to a body drive until sometime after the organism is biologically ready, then man will find some way around the custom. In our society, at least, masturbation is a way around the custom of identifying sexual intercourse with marriage. As a consequence, our young people reach sexual maturity before they are socially permitted to engage in sexual intercourse. The inability of the body to find sex expression in heterosexual (love between the sexes) activity expresses itself

in masturbation. This then becomes just one of the prices, perhaps, that we pay for our insistence that economic and educational stability be attained before marriage is allowed. Since we make no other permissible outlet available to our youth, we should not, in all rationality, blame either the youth or the practice. When, in our frustration, we fall back upon such terms as "will power," "gentlemanly and ladylike conduct," we merely are trying to verbalize our way around facts. These words imply threat. We have seen that threat and punishment have no preventive values and lead only to an overburden of anxiety. Certainly, our only recourse lies in understanding, tolerance, and knowledge.

While masturbation itself has no particularly ill effects, the practice itself can lead to undesirable behavior when special conditions prevail. These conditions are any that may lead to strong guilt or anxiety feelings. The two great factors leading to such feelings are, as we have seen, threat and punishment. The adolescent who has come to expect that his autoerotic behavior will lead him into "loss of manhood," "insanity," "glandular imbalance," "foolishness," or any other fantasy conjured up by human imagination, easily may develop deep feelings of anxiety about himself and his future.

Since he probably continues the practice despite the threats, he readily may develop strong feelings of worthlessness, helplessness, and isolation. As you well expect, these are the very feelings out of which our one-way solutions grow. This person therefore may fall into any of the traps that one-way solutions lay thickly over the path of life. Even in this case, it is vitally important to remember that it is not masturbation as such but the *attitude* the person has toward it that is basic to whatever abnormal behavior may emerge. Since the attitude of the young person in large measure is a reflection of the attitude of the parent, it becomes imperative that we adults cease to *fear* and come to *know*.

We should take the same realistic attitude toward the pseudoproblem of masturbation that we took toward the so-called "problem" of sex education in general. It is necessary that feelings of shock, horror, or disgust be carefully con-

trolled; that real effort be made to keep them from showing in our behavior as we move into a discussion of the situation when we encounter it. We can approach the masturbation habit with an attitude that while it is natural enough, it is more for the child than the grown-up. Keep in mind that the customary procedure is for the practice to decrease and ultimately to cease altogether as the youngster spends more and more time in activities outside of himself. You can augment this cessation by encouraging activity in recreational sports.

Keep your youth busy in extracurricular activities; see to it that ample opportunity for games and sports with age-mates is available. In general, no such encouragement will be necessary—most youth keep themselves amply busy. However, for the occasional solitary one, obtain memberships in groups whose activities center about healthy, physical diversions. Above all, expect relapses from time to time, and don't be unduly concerned about them. If you "catch him at it," do *not* use the situation to recriminate or blame. Never, never *spy* on your youngster in an effort to find out how successful your treatment may be. Through your own *behavior*, show him the meaning of trust and confidence. Keep in mind the fact that *nothing* that can happen as a result of the development of normal heterosexual interests can be as bad as their failure to develop.

The inner turmoil of a son of an unusually successful father finally drove the boy to ask for help. Since his early teens, he had actively engaged in homosexual activities and now, as he was approaching his professional training, he began to recognize, and to be disturbed about, the possibilities of exposure.

Discussion of his life in a permissive and accepting atmosphere revealed a somewhat common history, in which his training had been left largely to a socially ambitious mother and an older sister because of the demanding nature of his father's career. Further, the life plan for the son was well established by a rather complacent family expectancy. Several attempts to indicate that there were other vocational areas of interest to him met with calm but final refusal, usually taking the form of the paternal statement: "Yes, that is a good thing, but it's not for you, son." This planning of his

life, combined with the sheltering environment of a feminine-oriented home, developed a tremendous amount of father-hostility, which even now was unknown to him. His reaction to it, however, was expressed in the guise of poor academic work (despite great ability) and in his homosexual episodes. It was also significant that these sexual activities occurred primarily after an emotional upset involving some form of frustration. They were ways of "striking back" at an essentially domineering father. Actually, the only father-son contacts within the memory of the boy were those revolving about plans for his professional future. The fact that exposure would wreck father and son alike, while overtly feared, was inwardly desired.

### **PARENTAL GUIDANCE AND ATTITUDES**

Furthermore, remember your own youth? Keep in mind that he who would come into a court of equity against his fellow man *must* be able to show clean hands. So, remember what *you* did and how *you* felt. Is your life such a ruin as a result? We adults well can profit by our own experience although we usually forget. At least, if your parents held up chimeras of horror about sex play for you, it does not therefore follow that you *must* do similarly for your children. However, this will be your tendency.

Parental encouragement and approval should carry over into heterosexual contacts of a social nature. As your child grows, he needs an expanding horizon. In general, the wider the range of satisfactions and pleasures, the better it will be for him. Let ordinary horse sense dictate your practices in this regard. You may as well be permissive about this—restriction and "protection" do not work at all well. Let him select his own friends of either sex; do not try to determine for him who may or may not be worthy. Pros and cons may be discussed, and they should be, but his learning through his own experience remains the most efficient technique that we know. You cannot watch over him forever in any event and, in general, the earlier learning occurs, the more effective it will be—within limits of readiness, of course. He must sometime learn

the need of responsibility for personal behavior, and the early heterosexual adjustments are good areas to begin this learning. Have faith that *his* acts will, in all probability, be no worse than they would have been had you tried to dominate and control his behavior. Extreme parental controls often lead only to an overreaction to sex. This will be especially true if your youngster has "a mind of his own." He very well may set out to "prove" that he can handle things, and the inexperience that you have forced upon him may be central to the difficulties he encounters. Within the limits of good sense, let your youth make his own friends, both boys and girls, and if you feel that trouble brews, discuss the situation—don't argue it.

The home has real responsibility in the preparation of youth for marriage. This begins with the gradual introduction of a matter-of-fact attitude toward sex and sex functions. As the youth matures, this attitude leads directly into the development of healthy reactions to members of the opposite sex. It should be clear that wholesome attitudes such as these can grow only in an atmosphere low in emotionality and high in realism; an atmosphere in which *all* aspects of life are viewed in rational perspective. It is important to remember that no organism *learns* adequately when all possibility of error has been removed. Let youth profit from its mistakes and regard errors made as training in the ability to estimate and to judge. Help him when you can, when he asks for it, or when help palpably is indicated. Remember also that "puppy love" thrives on denial. The values in adolescent experience with members of the opposite sex are that this experience assists the young adult in recognizing the "real thing" when it comes along. Surely, it is better for your fifteen year old to be composing love sonnets and sighing his way through dinner because of an adored age-mate, regardless of "who" she is, than to have him, at twenty-one, rushing headlong into marriage with the first female who is "sweet" to him? In any case, you cannot live his life for him, and both of you will be much better off if you do not try.

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## 9. COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE

Let me not to the marriage of true minds  
Admit impediments: love is not love  
Which alters when it alteration finds.  
—William Shakespeare, *Sonnets*

**W**E HAVE SEEN THROUGHOUT THAT THE ADULT IS THE kind of person the child has been trained to be. This responsibility for adequate development is a major factor in the lives of parents in general. It is their duty to do the very best they can in order to prepare their children to meet the main problems of life squarely and effectively. As a sequence to the development of a realistic attitude toward sex, there arises the need for a sensible and factual outlook upon marriage. Parents can do a great deal to assure the marital happiness of their children but, in general, they shirk their task.

Somewhat over three centuries ago, Robert Burton made a statement in his *Anatomy of Melancholy* that has been widely misquoted ever since. Burton said: "Marriage and hanging go by destiny; matches are made in heaven." In line with our usual desire for condensation, this phrase usually is made to read: "Marriages are made in heaven." Over and above the fact that this is *not* what Burton said, it also is plain falsehood. A happy married life is the joint product of two people working together toward a common goal. The quality of this product will be a function of reciprocal and realistic give and take. Your happiness in your marriage is not a divine responsibility; it is *your* responsibility, and a highly personal one at that. Neither prayer nor wish will change you, overnight, from the kind of person you have been trained to be. If personal change is necessary, only you and your hard work can do the job. However, if you have had opportunity for an effective

preparation for marriage, only the task of adjusting yourself to your spouse faces you. If you have not had this preparation, you may have your work cut out for you. There is, you see, a direct and positive relation between success in marriage and adequate premarital preparation.

In one form or another, marriage is common to all societies. As a consequence of this, the family is the basis upon which the culture is built. In our society, the family is made up of a lawfully wedded couple, a man and a woman, and their offspring. Actually, because of the large number of childless marriages now in effect, we must consider that a family is constituted by the marriage of a man and a woman whether or not the union produces children.

No matter how we define it, we cannot question the fact that in our culture, the family has undergone great change over the years. Furthermore, the probabilities are that it will undergo still more. The fact that the family has changed leads some of our Prophets of Doom to lament that the modern family is disintegrating. According to these gloomy ones, we are on the way to a familyless, marriageless, free-love type of society. The picture here is a common one. Every worshiper of the status quo seems compelled to believe that change means only destruction; it seems never to occur to him that change *might* be good. In any event, the pessimism of our Prophets is quite unwarranted. What they really are saying is that change frightens *them* and consequently they try to scare all of us into resisting it. The facts are that those who proclaim that all must be as it always has been are crying lest they lose their mother-surrogate—unchanging routine.

### **THE TASK OF THE HOME**

It is quite true that when we measure the present family in terms of the family of the past, we find sizable losses in family unity. Although most of our families remain unified throughout the lives of the persons involved, an unduly large number of families do break up. This means that too many basically incompatible couples are getting married. Despite the devious



and ingenious legal reasons presented to the court, the probable fact is that most separations and divorces have their basis in sheer personality clash. Family disunity arises out of plain inability to get along, usually because someone insists upon having everything his own way. We will see that this incompatibility primarily results from behavior that is dictated by the old brain; it is a wishfulness that grows out of an emotional insistence that love be something apart from reality.

It also is true that many of the functions the family previously performed have been taken from it. The family, or the home, no longer is the center of the economic, religious, educational, and recreational lives of the persons involved. In large part, these functions have become the responsibility of the factory, the church, the school, and the commercialized amusements. Over the past hundred years or so, the general tendency has been toward getting the family members *out* of the home as technological advances have made extrahome activities increasingly available. Actually, the advent of television was the first consumer application of scientific development that tended to keep the family *within* the home. Even this has its price. While the family group may gather around the television set and hence tend to form a group more often than previously, it is a group by definition only because conversation and social interchange certainly are kept at a minimum.

However, broad experience is a basic factor in effective adjustment to life. Consequently, the net loss is small. Actually, probable gain has resulted. The economic, religious, educational, and recreational institutions that we have developed permit for infinitely more varied experience than a person could hope to obtain within the limits of his home. It remains, nevertheless, the duty of the home to prepare the youngster to absorb these broader experiences easily and effectively. What happens to the person in these extrahome institutions largely is a function of what already has happened to him *in* his home. As a consequence, the importance of the role the home can play in the lives of its children quite overshadows the things it has lost as a result of our increasing trend toward city and industrial living. In any case, little is to be gained through moan-

ing over lost prerogatives. The task has been and still is one of assuring that our lives are effective as we live through the present and that groundwork be laid for ready adjustment to the future.

Whatever may have been lost, the family (or home) remains *the* institution designed above all others to raise children in intelligently affectionate atmospheres, to train children in socially approved ways of behaving, to regulate sex, to give emotional values to it, and to prepare youth for successful marriages. There is enough challenge and enough work to be done in these areas without the futile expenditure of energy in bewailing what has been lost. We can say in all truthfulness that if each family in the country competently met this duty that, within one generation, delinquency, divorce, and crime would be reduced tremendously. Is it not therefore much better that we who constitute the home should set to the task society has assigned us rather than to complain: "The home has lost its meaning?" As a group, we humans are much too skilled in dreaming up alibis to excuse our laziness and much too little trained in the skills that would permit us to *meet* our obligations.

Whether we regard the home from a social or an individual point of view, an objective assessment shows us that the family actually possesses the most important function of all—that of training its children to meet life adequately. The home is the first and the most fundamental situation in which "face-to-face" and intimate interpersonal relations are established. The home is a primary school for the techniques of adjustment. Within the home, the people involved are extremely interdependent and it is here that the framework is erected for the future behavior of the person in social living. This is why no job-training program can make a willing worker out of the person whose home life has led him to expect that someone else will assume responsibility for him. No program of religious education can build religious convictions in the person whose parents, through their own example, have "taught" him that religion is a futile mixture of hypocrisy and superstition. No school can create the desire to learn in that youth whose family

appeared to regard the school as a place that relieved them of responsibility and who looked upon teachers as weak personalities who would not be teaching if they possibly could do anything else.

Although the actual instruction for the economic, religious, and educational lives of our youth has been removed from the fireside, the responsibility still remains for the adequate and socially desirable *preparation* for this instruction. If we feel that because some has been taken away, all is lost, we really are saying that if we cannot pitch, there isn't going to be any ball-game.

Socially as well, much remains for the home to accomplish. First of all, the home is the social institution of choice for the perpetuation of the species. As we have seen, the sex urge is but Nature's way of assuring that the species continues and, when it is regarded realistically, it is no more "troublesome" than hunger or thirst. The home also should transmit the social heritage. Within the home, the necessary skills for living with others should be established. Through language, we humans can "telescope" time. We can bring the past and the future into the present. In this manner, desirable aspects of our social heritage can be incorporated into our present behavior and our techniques of living can be aligned with our expectations of the future. The home is the proving ground for living with others. Home experience can make or break future social effectiveness. In the environment of the home itself, the give and take of social living is developed or aborted.

The realities of home responsibility have been structured. The good home, the good family, is one in which:

1. Each family member had his individual role to play and his own responsibilities to meet.
2. Each member placed the family itself above his own desires.
3. The family itself provided means for its members to satisfy their interests and needs.
4. The family was moving toward a known and anticipated goal toward which each member actively was working.

Further, as an indication of the importance for society of the good family, its functions are held to be:

1. To provide ways by which its members can cope with their basic physical needs and to make possible the attainment of security and belongingness feelings.
2. To find in marriage a continuing relationship between spouses in which each may fulfill his affectionate strivings.
3. To have and to raise healthy children.
4. To foster the kind of personal development that makes for the continuance of the democratic way of life.
5. To maintain the desirable aspects of cultural traditions from generation to generation.
6. To work out solutions between the demands made upon the individual and his ability to meet them.
7. In terms of social sanction, to work out coöperative living and vocational patterns appropriate to the needs, interests, and abilities of the family members.<sup>1</sup>

These tasks are answer enough for anyone who feels that the home is becoming a meaningless force in our culture. These responsibilities alone are quite enough to make the family a lifetime job for all of its members.

In each of our lives, the home is the primary institution. Within it, our life attitudes are developed and stabilized. We become, for better or worse, what our home has trained us to be. As our present attitude toward sex is a direct function of the training we received from our parents, so too our marital success is, in large measure, conditioned by the preparation for marriage we were given within our homes. In view of this fact, it becomes imperative that youth be made acquainted with modern thought in this life area. The whole range of courtship-marriage-parenthood must be considered in the light of factual and realistic knowledge. Therefore, let us look at the facts of the marital life as current research reveals them.

### **MARITAL FACTS**

With us, marriage is based upon love. Most of us would answer the question: "Why did you get married?" with "Because we were in love." This, of course, describes a social ideal.

<sup>1</sup> M. Brown, "Education and Family Life," in M. Fishbein, and E. Burgess (eds.), *Successful Marriage*, New York, Doubleday, 1955.

It is not at all uncommon for factors other than love to be involved. Although we have no provision for "marriages of convenience," many legal unions occur because of social or monetary advantage. "Love" commonly is assigned, but other factors often are found. Some of these are companionship, desire for a home and children, adventure and romance, escape from unhappiness, the search for sympathy, conquest, social expectation, sexual attraction, social status, and security. Almost any of us might add more but these seem to be the main foundations upon which marriages are made. In a survey of over 400 young married women, companionship was given first place, a "home of my own" was second, while the desire for children and romantic love were tied for third. Factors that were given lesser roles were social and economic pressure, escape, loneliness, and the like.<sup>2</sup>

While actual reasons may vary, we usually regard marriage as resulting from a freely made choice of mate based upon romance. The concept of romantic love can be traced back to the chivalry of the Middle Ages. Despite the fact that we carefully have screened the romance out of what was actually a veritable dog-eat-dog existence, we have come to regard romantic love as essential to a successful marriage. Once more, we have subordinated rationality to emotionalized tradition. As all of us *know*, the voyage begun in rose-scented moonlight often founders among the billows of soapsuds to come. Nevertheless, a part of our cultural heritage insists that marriages are based upon romantic love. We should, therefore, look into its features. When we do so, we observe these characteristics. Romantic love is composed of:

1. A mutual physical attraction.
2. Male dominance in courtship.
3. A coyly passive acceptance of this dominance by the female.
4. Strong feelings that the mutual attraction is permanent.
5. An idealizing of personal characteristics.
6. Discomfort when apart.
7. A refusal to consider the existence of faults or deficiencies.

<sup>2</sup> E. Duvall, and R. Hill, *When You Marry*, New York, Associated Press, 1945.

8. Irritation with anything that prevents the romance from continuing.<sup>3</sup>

We have continued to accept this somewhat shaky structure as the foundation for marriage and it recognizably is a common theme for much of the output of Hollywood. Remember, if the movies did not seem "real" to most of our population, they simply would not be attended. Therefore, Hollywood gives us what we expect and consequently will pay for. The sentimentalizings of the usual boy-meets-girl movie are but reflections of our own wishful beliefs. Keep in mind that the director says: "Cut!" immediately after boy has gotten girl and thus maintains the myth of "love conquers all!" Through this technique of showing the build-up only and leaving future adjustments to our sentimental imaginations, Hollywood can tell the Cinderella story over and over again and, with our own connivance, keep our eyes filled with stardust. It would seem the better part of reason to base marriage upon a sound instead of a sentimental framework. This would not destroy the thrill of the chase anymore than knowledge of the behavior of fish destroys the fun of fishing. Actually, the game is improved.

We most certainly can question romantic love as a desirable basis for marriage. Make-believe and wishfulness never should be permitted to replace reality in our thinking. If then, the courtship period is one of preparation for future harmony, we must insist that the needs for this preparation be met.

These needs center about the necessity for youth to become acquainted with enough members of the opposite sex so that real freedom of choice in mate selection presents itself. In general, the greater the opportunity for such acquaintance, the greater the chances that the ultimate selection will be a "right" one. We are on the road to this. Our centralizing of schools is bringing more and more young people together. Our females are becoming increasingly emancipated and we no

<sup>3</sup> K. Young, *Personality and Problems of Adjustment*, New York, Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1952, p. 481.

longer look down so disapproving a nose when girl chases boy. Actually, there is no real reason whatsoever why the girl should not be just as aggressive as the boy in courtship. Of course, there is a lot of tradition against it. Nor, other than tradition, is there any reason why the male must be the sole provider for the family. (Here too, we are working our way out, aided and abetted by woman's contribution to industrial production during the last war.)

There is no excuse for continuing traditional practices just because they are traditional. This becomes especially acute when such tradition adds to the frustrational load certain members of our society must carry. Certainly, we have enough without the deliberate addition of extra burden. The passivity in courtship and the economic dependence that we have traditionally forced upon woman has increased the load of frustration she must bear. She *needs* the activity of pursuit and the economic independence that we now limit to the male.

In the same vein, "love" that is not *love* is infatuation. The differences between these two ways of regard are known.

LOVE	INFATUATION
Relatively slow in development; steady and constant.	Quick, violent, forceful.
Love is a "feeling of oneness" and is limited to one person at a time.	Infatuated couples serve as sources of gratification, one for the other. Hence, a person may simultaneously be infatuated with several others.
Security feelings increase.	Insecurity feelings arise.
Jealousy does not strongly develop.	Jealousy strongly is involved.
Behavior is "you-oriented."	Behavior is "I-oriented."
Love can wait.	Infatuation cannot.
Enduring growth and responsibility is developed.	Change, turbulence, and reasonless behavior are characteristic. <sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> H. Bowman, "How Can You Tell if It's Love" in M. Fishbein, and E. Burgess (eds.), *Successful Marriage*, New York, Doubleday, 1955.

If we are willing to try, we can tell when the real thing comes along. We must recognize that several "infatuations" may precede "love." Unfortunately, our culture emphasizes infatuation with its Cinderella and romantic motifs. As a people, our tendency is to revere the superficial, to remain emotionally immature, and continuously to mistake glitter for gold. Yet, it is easy to show that this condition need not be. We have only to apply what we know, to behave at the level of actuality, and to cease placing our trust in sheer wishfulness. Let us therefore look at the things that may be done better to assure marital happiness.

It is no more than common sense that the broader our experience has been in a situation, the more effective our adjustment within it can be. Getting along with a married mate offers no exception to this rule. At the theoretical level, at least, we already provide for broad experience in the selection of a mate through our common dating practices. However, this function of dating is served *only* when there is both freedom and opportunity for this experience to occur. If dating is curtailed by parental disapprovals, or by the unavailability of sufficient members of the opposite sex, the person suffers and the probable success of his marriage becomes proportionately reduced. Opportunity for dating practices without strict parental control becomes imperative. Here, as elsewhere, the smothering influence of the zealous "mom" is lethal.<sup>5</sup>

It is reasonable to expect that the youth who has had dating experiences with twenty-odd members of the opposite sex and who has "gone steady" with two or three will be able to select a life partner with whom he has a chance of being compatible. It also is reasonable that the youth whose heterosexual contacts have been limited by fearful parents will enter marriage with so little experiential knowledge that the probability of unhappiness becomes strong. Only through dating a variety of age-mates, can youth develop the skills and confidence that are essential for effective social adjustment. When such a

<sup>5</sup> E. Strecker, *Their Mother's Sons*, Philadelphia, Lippincott, 1946; P. Wylie, *Generation of Vipers*, New York, Rinehart, 1942; see however, L. Kanner, *In Defense of Mothers*, Springfield, Thomas, 1951.





*"How do you do? Jerry's told me so much about you that I feel I dislike you already."*

FIGURE 18. Reproduced from *Let's Go to Bedlam*, p. 17, by Charles Preston, published by Shelley Publishing Company, by permission.

youth enters the courtship period, he brings a background of experience with him and therefore can be expected to make a more effective choice.

The use of premarital counseling services is fundamentally good, sound sense. Good marriages are not ready-made; they are personal achievements. The premarital interview is excellent preparation for being more certain that a good marriage will be achieved. Misunderstandings and difficulties can be headed off, the things that probably will occur can be discussed and solutions considered, the couple can be made ready for the *job* they have to do. A great deal is known of the stuff from which successful marriages are made, and this knowledge is available to anyone who is willing to ask. The factor of sheer chance in marital success can be held to a minimum and the probabilities of happy relationships increased. One thing is certain. If we make use of these services, we can rest assured that we have done everything possible to make sure that our marriage is off on the right foot, and getting the right start is very important. A physician who also is experienced in premarital counseling can do a most effective piece of work in this area. However, not just *any* M.D. can do the job; the Doctor is still a person!

As has been shown, another difficulty with romantic love lies in the belief that love is something sudden; that it is a thing unrecognizable until it strikes; that it is something we intuitively *know*. This is pure hogwash. Love is learned behavior. When youth falls in love, he commonly follows through on a destiny that was established for him in early childhood experience. We tend to marry the person with whom we feel that we can reproduce the love relationship we found with our parents. The development of this early emotional attachment into marital expectancies has been described as follows:

1. The child develops an affectional relationship with the parent and this relationship is important to his later marriage.
2. If this affectional relationship with the parent has been a happy one, the child ultimately will tend to fall in love with a person who possesses characteristics similar to those of the parent he loved.

3. If this affectional relationship has been unhappy, the child comes to love another individual who shows characteristics opposite to those possessed by the parent. An exceptional case, however, is found in the child whose love for a parent is not returned. This early frustration may lead the thwarted one to seek out an adult who possesses characteristics similar to the frustrating parent but who also gives love in return.
4. The parent who shares in this affectional relationship is usually of the opposite sex to the child.
5. The adult tends to relive his childhood affectional life in the marital situation. Thus, the child who loves his parents, but because of parental detachment also experiences strong feelings of resentment and hostility, tends to carry over these emotional attitudes into his own marital relations.<sup>6</sup>

Since we already have had ample opportunity to show how early experience can condition later behavior, we have no reason to suppose that marriage constitutes any exception. The emotional relations described above can be seen to play a highly important role in marital happiness. The responsibility for the family clearly is indicated. Just as with normal development, as with the formation of neurotic behaviors, so too with marital success—the interpersonal relationships in the home are deciding factors. Happy parents not only rear happy children, they also lay the foundation for happy marriages.

### **HAPPY MARRIAGES**

If, in the home, the child learns to love and to trust his fellow man, the success of his marital life to come is that much better assured. If, in the home, the child develops attitudes of suspicion and antagonism, he will carry them bodily into his later marriage. The burden is squarely upon the shoulders of parents; theirs is the choice. They may train for love or they may train for hate. The latter way is the easier, more emotional, and less rational practice.

Love is not a thing of blindness except that we who have a hand in its development are blind to the facts. Love is a culmi-

<sup>6</sup> E. Burgess, and L. Cottrell, *Predicting Success or Failure in Marriage*, New York, Prentice-Hall, 1939.

nation of a long process that begins in early childhood. Love is behavior that can be planned for and predicted. You can do this for yourself, but it is better if it is done by your parents. Of course, you can and should do it for your children. Actually, parents, and perhaps parents alone, can make or break a marital future. Happiness and unhappiness tend to perpetuate themselves from generation to generation. Since the factors basic to happy marriages are *known*, we are just plain stupid if we do not apply them. It is only ignorance and the dead hand of the past that stand in our way. The situation is this: If we wish to maintain the home as the basic institution in our society, we must break with our dream world of romanticism and begin to regard marriage as it is—a *problem in human relations*. Marriage centers about two people who are trying to get along one with the other. It is the impulsiveness inherent in the emotion of our old brain that causes most marital disagreements to arise out of conflict between *wishes*.

Even though a young adult unconsciously may search for a fulfillment of his childhood expectations as he moves toward marriage, nevertheless, he can still make reasonably certain that a possible spouse is or is not for him. In answer to the question: "Is he (or she) for me?"—we are told honestly to meet ten questions. If we can answer all ten of them with an objective "yes," the odds for happiness are in our favor. If, however, we say "no" to but one of them, we should be cautious indeed. These questions are:

1. Am I happier with her than I am with any other woman?
2. When I am not with her, am I persistently wishing for her company, or does some other woman put her out of my mind?
3. Would I be not only willing, but glad, to spend my life with her, centering my other interests about her?
4. Would I gladly give up all my interests and activities that do not conform with my devoting my life interest to her?
5. Is she the one woman whom I would choose, above all others, to be the mother of my children, both to give them birth and to bring them up?
6. Do I love her with her faults of face, figure, disposition, education, or what not (for she has faults and I know it); do I even

love those faults or defects themselves, as being essential parts of her?

7. Is she apparently disposed to make for me sacrifices as great as those I am willing to make for her?
8. Is she disposed to adapt herself to me to a reasonable extent in interest, in temperamental matters, and in other ways, or does she expect me to do all the adapting?
9. Is there a community of interests and culture adequate to a joint life with her?
10. Do I like her family well enough to be able to tolerate them, and get along with them, or if not, is it fairly certain that I will not have to associate with them?<sup>7</sup>

Observe that the first three of these questions bear upon those aspects of courtship we have seen to be typical of romantic love. Consequently, any adolescent in the throes of his first love experience would answer "Yes!" most enthusiastically. However, the remaining questions well could give him pause. These questions, of course, were devised as a sort of check list for us when we contemplate matrimony. They are serious attempts to help us predict our probable success. If then, you can give an honest and unqualified affirmative to each question, the one of your choice probably is the one for you.

Honest answers, born of serious thought, will aid in predicting marital success. Many reasons support this statement. All of us know that marriage involves responsibilities. When we marry and have children, we immediately assume the duty of rearing socially adequate offspring. Responsibility here centers about directing the educational, recreational, and religious training of our children. The interpersonal relations that will emerge when this task is begun will demand much more than an attractive face or figure if the job is to be done right. You will need to show companionship, to share the effort, and to work with your spouse toward a mutually agreed-upon goal. The commonality in this effort may demand the smoothest of social skills. If either partner shirks duty or be-

<sup>7</sup> Reprinted by permission from *Personal Adjustment* by K. Dunlap. Copyright, 1946, by McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.

comes upset about the tasks asked, there is trouble ahead. Successful marriage insists upon two people *coöperating* in the finest sense of the word.

Several factors emerge as essential to this united effort. Most of these are implied in Dunlap's ten questions. These questions are directed at *you*. They predict your marital behavior because they ask you to look into yourself and to see how you feel. You see, the ability to recognize love when it comes is a function of self-understanding. Since all disturbances in interpersonal relations of any sort usually stem from individual inability or refusal to look into the self, self-understanding (insight) becomes essential for this most intimate of all interpersonal things—marriage. In all probability, inquiry into yourself and the insight that may therefore emerge is more important than the background factors of which so much has been made. Of course, since you are, largely, what your background has been, examination of these factors in yourself *and* in your prospective mate can be very, very helpful. In order that you can make these comparisons between yourself and your mate-to-be, the following factors are known to be predictive in marital happiness:

1. Happiness of your parents.
2. Your happiness in childhood.
3. Absence of conflict with mother or father.
4. Firm, but not harsh, discipline in your home.
5. Strong affectional attachment to both parents.
6. Mild and infrequent childhood punishment.
7. Premarital attitudes free from disgust or aversion.
8. Parental frankness and objectivity in sexual education.
9. Engagement long enough to permit for thorough acquaintance.
10. Similarity in educational, economic, religious, and social backgrounds.

Notice that at least eight of these background factors are determined by early experience in the home. Once again, we see the deep importance that the home life of the child carries for the later adjustment of the adult. Observe also the dominant role played by intelligence, rationality, objectivity, and understanding. Childhood happiness, freedom from conflict

and fear, love for the parent and parental happiness itself simply cannot coexist with the dictatorship of wish, desire, and impulse. New brain control is demanded if our lives are to be happy.

In addition to the ten personal questions and the ten background factors, you can estimate your probable happiness in marriage with a do-it-yourself test. When you answer the questions that shortly will be asked of you, you must be just as honest as you possibly can. So answer these questions with a "yes" or a "no," and strive for accuracy, objectivity, and fairness.

1. Can you be depended upon to finish a job you have begun?
2. Were you happy as a child?
3. Are you free from morbid fears and thoughts about sex?
4. Can you decide things for yourself easily and without worry?
5. Are you objective with yourself and with others?
6. Are you free from acute sensitiveness so that you are not easily hurt?
7. Do you like people?
8. Do you get along readily with people?
9. Can you accept suggestions from others without feeling imposed upon?
10. Can you adapt yourself easily to new situations and events?
11. Do you "stop and think" rather than decide in terms of your feelings?
12. Do you try to see things from the other fellow's viewpoint?
13. Are you usually calm and relaxed?
14. Are you concerned about what other people think about you?
15. Do you believe in the standards and ideals of social conduct?
16. Are you interested in many things?
17. Are you generally carefree and happy?
18. Are you considerate of the feelings of others?
19. Do you feel reasonably well contented with life?
20. Is your emotional life smooth and even rather than continuously up and down?<sup>8</sup>

If you cheat at solitaire, cheat on this test as well. Either act will be equally valuable to you and will give an equally un-

<sup>8</sup> C. Adams, and V. Packard, *How to Pick a Mate*, New York, Dutton, 1946.

realistic picture of your make-up. In *solitaire*, you can get away with it; on this test, your marriage will find you out.

However, if you answered all of the questions with "yes" and your answers are as *honest* as you can make them, you are an excellent marital bet. Wherever you may honestly have had to say "no," sit down with yourself and ask yourself some more questions. Try to find out why you had to say "no" and then look into the problem of so changing yourself that your answer will become affirmative. Discover what you must do in order to change and then decide whether or not you are willing to pay the price to do so. If you are not willing to pay this price, well and good. At least you now are honest with yourself, you know where a shortcoming lurks, and you can compensate for it, if you try.

If, however, most of your answers were negative, maybe you'd better stay single. You aren't grown up emotionally, your "thinking" is mostly wishing, and you'll be a pain in your spouse's neck! "No" answers indicate poor life adjustment and the personality-in-conflict is a bad marital risk.

Whatever the case may be, if you contemplate matrimony, do these things before you convert the thought into action:

Ask yourself Dunlap's ten questions and ask them of your prospective mate.

Look into your own background and into hers or his for the background factors listed. Take the test and give it also to her or to him. Examine the results carefully. Remember, your marriage will be happy to the extent that you agree. If you and your mate-to-be vary widely in your answers, it would be wise to part friends now rather than to marry and to become enemies later.

If wide variances between you and your loved one show up in this mutual examination, the probabilities of marital success shrink accordingly. However, if you still want to marry despite the differences, go ahead. Take the chance (you probably will anyway!), it may work out fine for you. When differences are wide between mates, some marriages work well despite them. Of course, most do not and so the odds are against you. Remember, as you consider issues here, that it al-



ways is easier for us to follow our emotional impulses than to obey the dictates of reason. Therefore, if you decide to go ahead regardless and things should foul up for you, blame yourself and don't whine about an unhappy fate. You knew what the score was, you figured the odds, and *you* made the decision.

Nevertheless, there are some human characteristics that are genuine red lights. Watch for them, and if you find them in a prospective mate, get out from under right now. They forecast marital ruin.

### **DANGER SIGNALS**

Beware signs of *jealousy*. Jealousy will flatter your ego and flatten your life. A jealous mate simply cannot be lived with and marriage involves a heap of living. Jealousy appears as a significant factor in at least one-half of all divorces. Jealousy arises out of many personal traits, all of which are undesirable. The jealous person is the frustrated, insecure, and uncertain person. The jealous one feels that people are not to be trusted (because he cannot trust himself?), that life is threatening and unhappy. Attitudes like these are just no good in close interpersonal relations. If your "steady" constantly is alert for signs that your affection is wanting, if you get the impression that he feels you are not to be trusted, break it off.

Shy away from *missionary tendencies*. Remember that Dunlap's sixth question is aimed at accepting the spouse as he (or she) is. This question is included among the ten because we know all too well that personality change must occur before the marriage if, in general, it is to take place at all. Once the bonds are knit, we tend to remain whatever we are. Consequently, if one member of the wedded team assumes the task of "improving" the other, danger signals pop up all over the place. Marriage is mutual living in its finest guise and mutuality suffers quickly when the self-appointed missionary enters the situation. If you find flaws in your prospective spouse, iron them out *before* the ceremony; you will reap only a headache if you wait until afterwards. Before you marry, look beneath the

glamour. Know your partner-to-be as he is and accept or reject on this basis. Do not permit the living togetherness of marriage to reveal them to you. Know thyself and know thy spouse as well. No marriage can survive a superior-inferior relationship, or any kind of an "I do, but you don't!" opposition. In marriage, as in no other human relationship, there must be equality. Souls lost before the wedding seldom are saved afterwards.

It is a fact that most divorces occur in the early years of married life. A principal reason for this is that wedlock is so intimate that flaws in human make-up are soon revealed. Furthermore, the decision to take divorce action commonly is made within months after the wedding although it may be much later when the separation legally gets worked out. The best way to prevent marital rupture is to be sure first that your choice is right for you. While humans always will err, you can reduce the probability of error in marriage by a careful check-out before you take the step.

In our discussion of the neuroses, we described them fundamentally as disturbances in human relations. Marriage is the epitome of human relations; marriage *is* two people living together. Therefore, evidence of neurotic trends should make you very wary. If you detect indications of strong insecurity or any of the characteristics of maladjustment, look elsewhere or visit a marriage counselor. If disturbances basic to neurotic trends are present, the odds are that marriage will increase their role in the life of the person. Marriage will not cure neurosis but it very well may bring one into full strength. So, to hope that "things will be different after we're married" is to live in ignorance. Things most certainly *will* be different, but not quite in the way you hope. Keep in mind the standards of good adjustment already described. The more closely you and your spouse approach these standards, the better the two of you will get along. Any extensive deviation from normal in any of the personality traits of good adjustment is grounds for caution and care.

Also, be cautious if you detect tendencies to alibi or to excuse behavior. The "little white lies" can lead to great, big

ones and, from there, to serious misunderstandings. Anyone who is not strong enough to stand by his own behavior will be a slim reed to lean upon in times of stress. When the alibi is habitual, the emotions are immature. The child characteristically blames other people or things for his failures, but the adult should have outgrown this. You are completely foolish to handicap yourself with an emotional infant as a life partner. Marry the emotionally immature person and you'll live to regret it. Remember, excuses are attempts to evade responsibility and a falsehood, white or black, remains a lie.

Be wary, too, if your prospective mate tends to avoid responsibility through ways of escaping from it. Signs of this trait are sleepiness in times of stress, withdrawal into the self when feelings are hurt, retreat of any kind when things go wrong. Common retreats are sulking, escape into fiction, crawling into a bottle. If your man or your girl shows signs of needing a little drink in order to face things, run away—just run away. Little habits like these will grow greater as the marriage ages. The one who tries to escape reality, in whatever manner, will be most difficult to live with. If you marry one such, be sure that *all* problems will wait for you to solve. Your spouse will be asleep, daydreaming, reading, or drunk at just the time you will have greatest need of him. If you marry the escapist, plan on carrying a double load.

Then, there is the question of in-laws. Like it or not, when you marry you also marry into a family. In a sense, when you join your spouse in wedlock, you also join a fraternity of relatives. If you plan to live within easy traveling distance of this group, look the members over carefully. Most mothers-in-law are real right gals, but there are some who can be dillies! The "mom" who has smothered her own child will try also to smother you. Since we have discussed maternal overprotection, you know what to look for. If you want specifics on what to avoid in "in-laws," read Strecker's—*Their Mother's Sons*.

Finally, beware the person who has made a game of conquest out of love. You can be reasonably sure that once the novelty of marriage has worn off, this character will begin to look about for unconquered territory. You must not expect

that the habitual flirt (of whatever sex) will be considerate of you; the very behavior itself tells you that the only interest is self-interest. *You* shortly will play background music for the dalliance his shaky personality structure needs. Through his "conquests," he proves to himself that, after all, he is a real person. If he adds up to a true "wolf," let him run. No trap, however tender, will hold him for long.

Summing up, those persons who cannot really love another are those who:

1. Are emotionally immature and hence not capable of love as a sharing proposition.
2. Have an inordinate attachment to a parent and therefore, while they can transfer this attachment to an age-mate, they cannot love another.
3. Are so egocentric (narcissistic) that they cannot love another except as a sort of mirror which will reflect their own infinite desirability.
4. Feel a predatory attitude toward the other sex, and to whom a spouse can never be a genuine love object but at best becomes a means for self-gratification.
5. Have a fearful attitude toward sex, and although they may simulate love effectively, yet do not really love.
6. Possess a basic insecurity and need for attention. For these, "love" is compulsive, driven, and a neurotic search for security.
7. Use love as a means to escape from an undesirable home or social situation.
8. Are homosexual (latent or overt), since love for one's own sex is incompatible with heterosexual love. The line between the narcissist and the homosexual is tenuous indeed. Both have little to give to the opposite sex and represent serious personality maladjustment.
9. In a nutshell, anyone who cannot accept himself will be unable to love.

### **SUCCESSFUL MARRIAGE**

There are a lot of things you can do to increase the probability that your marriage will be a happy one. However, you first must forego the myth and superstition that largely surround our usual concepts of wedded life. This world of ours is

filled with uncertainties at its best. Why, therefore, compound them with stupidity? We know reasonably well what makes a successful marriage, and the factors involved largely are open to examination before the ceremony takes place. It would surely be but good sense to put our knowledge to work. Despite the fact that all of us know of the intimate relation between hasty marriage and leisurely repentance, we keep right on trying!

Everything considered, your selection of a mate will boil down to your "spouse ideal." This term asks the question: "What kind of a person do you expect your spouse to be?" Once you have answered this question in reasonable completeness, then look for that kind of a mate. It will be very important to you either to find living representation of your "spouse ideal" or to rethink and to restructure the role you expect your spouse to play. If you marry only to discover that your mate does not fit your idea of a proper spouse, you are in for some heart-rendering regrets. Some thought and a plan right now may save you a bundle of heartaches later. Consider for a moment. Do you anticipate that your spouse will accompany you on fishing and hunting trips? If so, shy away from the hothouse variety of personality. Do you enjoy sitting about the home hearth and television? If so, beware the party type. Remember, the attitudes and behaviors your selection now displays will continue right on—for life!

In complete bewilderment, a college senior reported that his wife was planning on leaving him and would say only that she "didn't love him anymore." Since he was deeply in love with her and very proud of his infant son, he was quite unable to understand. Discussion with wife revealed that her "loss of love" was merely an easy way to deal with an otherwise untenable situation. She had grown up under conditions of privation and carried a deep-seated fear of poverty. Her husband, who was combining the joys of family and fraternity life, saw no reason for concern so long as his Federal subsistence was adequate for the family bills. To date, it had been, although only through the economies effected by the wife. She, however, could no longer stand up under the dual strain of homemaking and penny-pinching. She planned, therefore, to return to

her old job and to live with a married sister. When the husband discovered the real reason for the friction, he found employment and reported later that all that was necessary was the additional income. Now his wife, having a financial backlog, economized as before but felt no threat in this since the family finances were no longer marginal.

As most of us realize, our institution of marriage tends to be emotionally rather than rationally based. If we wish, however, we can put this most intimate of human relationships upon a reasonably objective plane. The decision to marry usually means lifelong obligation and therefore should be made as carefully as possible. In summary, the knowledge applicable both by parent and marital aspirant follows.

#### PREMARITAL PREPARATIONS

1. Dating and courtship practices should be regarded and utilized as deliberate training for marriage. In these, youth can obtain trial by experience in the search for a mate. The person can study and look for evidences of mutual compatibility; a search that will pay off well if its results are actively utilized in effecting a final choice.
2. Consideration should be given for the role played in marital happiness by the background experiences and accustomed surroundings of the couple. If the parents of the prospective mates were happy and if the mate's childhood were a happy one, so much to the good. Similarity in the background of the mate's parents is also important. Since marriage is interpersonal relationship in its most intimate form, it is desirable that the mates have had many premarital friends of both sexes. The "lone wolf" should be avoided. Sociability—a general liking for people—is quite important. The higher the educational level of the mates, the better the prospect for mutual happiness. Religious interests in common and a stable and dependable income also increase the chances for success. Wide differences in any of these imply risk and should be resolved during courtship.
3. With regard to personality characteristics, it is important to know the underlying patterns of adjustment as well as the more superficial traits. In this general area, the following characteristics are known to be desirable:
  - Optimism
  - Emotional stability

Coöperativeness

Sympathetic tendencies

Self-confidence

Emotional dependency (as contrasted with self-sufficiency)

4. Commonality of interests must be considered. Recreative practices should be shared, and if children are planned, both mates actively should desire them. It is important to agree concerning friends and the role friends shall play. Both should be domestic in the sense that both want, and are genuinely interested in maintaining, a home. The general outlook on life should be similar, as well as a mutual agreement regarding career and vocation.

Another check point on the list of premarital preparations is the physical examination. We already know that marital happiness and successful parenthood are based upon teachable skills. If we want to prevent the "I wish I had known this before" reaction, when postmarital troubles arise, we should check on what is known in advance. A premarital physical examination with its accompanying explanation and advice can be helpful in the prevention of regret. As we said before, however, the granting of a M.D. degree does not automatically bring with it the understanding and sympathetic tolerance with which this advice must be framed. So, select your physician with care.

The values in the premarital physical examination lie in the fact that it will reveal:

1. The readiness of the female for intercourse.
2. The relative ease and possibility of conception.
3. What contraceptives will be most effective.

Understanding in these areas by both partners can be most helpful in assuring that intercourse shall be mutually satisfying. Furthermore, if examination indicates any unusual development, activity, or positioning of bodily organs, the situation will be understood and, if necessary, corrected before it can become a point of friction.

#### **PREPARATION FOR MARRIAGE**

Premarital preparation stops short of premarital sex experimentation. Little is to be gained by trial runs before mar-

riage. Actually, the evidence is that premarital sex experience is of no help at all in sex adjustment during the honeymoon. Despite the indications that premarital sex experimentation is increasing within our unmarried population, there appears to be small advantage in the practice. However, the problem is not one for legislation or fulmination. It is one to be understood and to be trained away.

In our culture, the social and economic prerequisites for marriage tend to be attained long after sexual maturity has been reached. Furthermore, the adolescent reaches sexual maturity before he attains similar maturity in judgment. This means, once again, that effective sex education *must* be given before the adolescent attains sexual maturity. Recognize that as freedom of behavior increases (as it should), so too does opportunity for intimacy. As a consequence, sex education must be well and effectively done if the adolescent is to possess the ideals and knowledge that are necessary for him to postpone sexual activity until marriage.<sup>9</sup> It should be obvious to you that the control sufficient to prevent premarital sex relations is obtained only through the kind of understanding and knowledge that will permit a personal and social sense of responsibility to develop. This, you will not obtain through scolding, punishment, and fear. Nor will pious appeals to "decency" serve you any better. It is a job to be done and one that can be done well when the doing is factually and realistically based.

A young, unmarried lady went to a psychologist because she was troubled by her quite active sex life. She was going steady with her man and was concerned that she had not only gone too far, but also too often. As the discussion advanced, however, it became apparent that it was not remorse for having violated moral precept that was bothering her but rather the fear of pregnancy. To the obvious question about contraceptives, she replied: "Oh, I couldn't! That would make it seem so *planned!*"

Heavy petting is closely allied with premarital sex relations and, in fact, commonly is the road traveled to them. This type

<sup>9</sup> Suggestions helpful at this point may be found in: A. Stephens, "Premarital Sex Relationships" in M. Fishbein, and E. Burgess, *Successful Marriage*, New York, Doubleday, 1955.



of love-making can be distinguished from petting as such. Petting, as caressing and fondling, can be defined as a pleasurable activity that is an end to itself. It stops short of actual intercourse, although it well may terminate in some degree of unresolved sexual tension.

*Heavy petting* involves the fondling of intimate body parts such as the breasts, thighs, and genitals. The probabilities are that heavy petting actually is harmful because of the frustrations that may be induced by the strongly aroused sex urge. As a consequence of this arousal of strong desire, the adolescent who is able to maintain her *tout excepté ça* status is one of unusual strength. Unfortunately, the demands often are more than the enthusiastic, but inexperienced, youth anticipates. The reasonable assumption is that effective sex education should work to decrease the incidence of heavy petting, with its all too frequent consequence of *ça*. When young people understand the facts and their implications, they better can be expected to put heavy petting only to its biological use—as preparation for intercourse in marriage.

Common reasons for premarital sex activity are as follows:

1. Misplaced trust and confidence.
2. A promissory note drawn on marriage.
3. A desire for "new" experience; a search for a thrill.
4. A desire to please a loved one.
5. A neurotic drive for affection and attention.

Although we cannot go into details about the tremendous individual variations that appear in this area, the following cases are reasonably typical.

N. B., in obvious consternation, asked for a "conference." After the usual icebreaking chitchat, she began to talk about her lovelife. Ultimately, it was revealed that the source of her concern was a week end spent with her fiancé. This had culminated in the pair spending a night together in which they shared a bed, but N. insisted rather continuously that "nothing had happened." Whether or not anything did was felt to be a moot point, but the reason for the experience was a final giving in to persistent coaxing and pleading by the swain. "He wanted me to so badly that I was afraid that I would lose him if I continued to refuse."

R. I. became involved in a sexual escapade sheerly through a near-compulsion to be "liked." Although engaged to a boy who was living in a distant community, she was completely unable to resist her tremendous need for affection and finally accepted a date. Ultimately, she and her date found themselves in a "beer joint" much frequented by their age-mates, and one or two drinks were all that was necessary to remove R's rather weak inhibitions. Other males were accumulated and the resulting sexual orgy was a nightmare to R the next day. In complete contrition and under strong censure of conscience, she came to talk things over. Since no strong habit patterns had been established, it was possible to deal with her difficulty through increased insight and self-understanding. R's case is an excellent illustration of the fact that alcohol, petting, and virginity are quite incompatible.

One young lady's opening conversational gambit was: "What do you think of premarital sex relations?" "A very interesting topic of discussion, how do you feel about it?" "Well, I had always wondered just what intercourse was like." "Would you care to explain just what you mean?" "Well, as I said, I had always wondered just what it would be like and so I decided to try it." "What do you think about it now?" "Highly overrated!"

### **MARRIED LIFE**

So much for the preparation for marriage; how about the married life itself? As elsewhere in the area of interpersonal relations, we find that the realistic application of knowledge pays off within marriage. In order of appearance, the first question would be: "Are honeymoons necessary?" The answer appears to be: "No." Most married women feel that it is not essential despite its fulfillment of romantic tradition. What is more, most married women do *not* look back upon their honeymoon as an idealistically happy experience. For many, the honeymoon was a bit stressful because the adaptation to mutual needs in intercourse had not yet had time to appear. Adequate sexual harmony usually is the result of patient trial and error; if it is achieved during initial experiences, just be grateful. It looks very much as though the honeymoon, along

with other romantic fiction about marriage, has no more meaningfulness than the participants give to it. In itself, it does not contribute to marital success.

There is a similar relationship between attitude and success in the sexual relations, within marriage, themselves. As a consequence, we need information, not nonsense. Sex is not the "without which nothing" in marriage as some would have us believe. At the same time, this statement should not be taken as an indication that sex in marriage is unimportant. Nothing could be farther from the facts. Unfortunately, sexual maladjustment between married partners is common. Equally unfortunately, sexual maladjustment in marriage springs from faulty sex training in the early lives of the pair. In general, this faulty training has centered about the sex taboo. Sex was not discussed and consequently little was understood about it. Other than our own stupidity, there is no excuse for this. Actually, it's all a bit silly—although typically human. We stoutly maintain that sex and marriage must go together (and thereby, at least, *imply* that sex is important), but we do nothing to assure that love and marriage will go hand in hand. It's worse than this. We try to "shush" sex as much as we can! *Homo sapiens?*

The implications of our behavior toward sex are even more frightening. The taboo we place around sex spreads out to include affectionate relations in general. Much too often, we humans display a poker-faced impassiveness when warm and open affection much better should rule.

As a result of this "mustn't talk about it" attitude, we tend to smother normal psychosexual development under a blanket of secrecy and shame. We refuse to recognize that this psychosexual growth lays the ground work for the later ability to express freely such feelings as kindness, sympathy, friendliness, and tolerance. Here again, we *say* we want something but we so arrange the rules of the game that we have difficulty in obtaining it. The price we pay for our thoughtlessness is a generalized emotional underdevelopment. Prudery runs dear indeed. What we need, and need badly, is understanding

guidance in, and an open acceptance of, this vital aspect of living. We know that much can be accomplished through intelligent sex education, but we do very little about it.

A formula for our consideration has been described. See if it does not make sense to you and, if it does, incorporate it into your thinking, your attitudes, and your behavior. Here it is: "Facts of sexuality plus personal and social ideals plus a well-balanced work and recreational program equal morally good, happy, and responsible citizens. In contrast to this, let us put the formula most people are struggling and worrying along with: No facts of sexuality plus no personal and social ideal plus a restricted and empty work and recreational life (out of the parents' fear of the child's coming into contact with temptation) equal unhappiness, inefficiency, poor marital adjustment, neurosis, and personal defects contributing to alcoholism, delinquency, psychosis, and suicide."<sup>10</sup> It is the second formula that those who insist that sex education will but increase man's sexual problems would have us follow. How about you, which do you prefer? In line with your choice, regulate your behavior.

At its best, marriage is *work*. The fact that two or more people live together within the confines of a home makes problems inevitable. Commonly, these problems center about monetary, social, religious, and personal questions. One way for married couples to reduce the severity and duration of these issues is to have a mutually satisfying sex life. Actually, you already know this. When you feel wanted, you do not feel that you are alone; when you know that you are loved, you know you are a *somebody*; when you *belong* to someone, you belong in life. Under such conditions, life's troubles are much less threatening. You know that you do not have to face them alone; that you can ask and obtain help if you need it. The shared ecstasy of a genuinely happy sex life helps to make co-operation in other areas all the easier. It is not only "not good for man to *live* alone," under normal conditions, it just isn't

<sup>10</sup> O. English, "Sexual Adjustment in Marriage" in M. Fishbein, and E. Burgess, *Successful Marriage*, New York, Doubleday, 1955. Reproduced by permission.

possible. He may *exist* all by himself, but he certainly is not living! The keynotes to a sharing of the sex life are implied by *freedom from taboo* and *thoughtful consideration*.

Freedom from taboo is found in the willingness to discuss freely such important aspects of sexual adjustment as the strength and incidence of sexual desire, how maximum pleasurable-ness may be achieved, how much, if any, sex play should precede intercourse, what position is mutually most satisfactory, or any aspect that may need working through. Naturally, there is no room in these discussions for prudery or smugness.

Thoughtful consideration implies that both of you actively are interested in the maximum satisfaction that you can attain. Each of you therefore should recognize that the position of your bodies, the time, and the place are not really important considerations because your goal is mutual content. *Selflessness* must be your rule. If your wife responds best when she is amply caressed prior to the sex act, for heaven's sake, caress her! Postpone your own urgency and build toward a mutual meeting of desire. This may not be as easy as it sounds. Balzac has told us: "A man expressing his passion is sometimes like an orangutan trying to play the violin!" Balzac was exactly right. The balance that successful sexual relations demand necessitates a certain degree of finesse and delicacy; here is no place for the bull-like rush. Much better that you, the husband, demonstrate your strength and virility in mowing the lawn instead of trying to reap your pleasures in bed. Love and sexual brutality are completely opposed. Human beings enjoy sexual pleasure to the extent that they give it; human animals enjoy rape. Furthermore, gentleness and consideration pay off. In sex, as in all human relations, you get in terms of what you give. To thoughtful consideration, add fastidiousness. In the nineteenth century, before the days of modern hygiene, it was perhaps possible for a Frenchman to say that marriage was but a shift from bad humor in the daytime to bad odor at night. Today, there is no excuse whatsoever.

Now, wife, it's your turn. If your husband wants to kiss and caress parts of your body other than your lips, let him. Assist

and encourage him in the process. There must be no embarrassment here, and heightened pleasure will result. Your formula and his should read: "Do whatever you like; whatever is pleasurable." Pleasure is the prime goal in sex relations. It is stupid to surround the act with prim and prudish "decencies." In really satisfactory sexual adjustments, each of you will do *whatever* seems needful to give pleasure, and the act will then become what it should be—pure, unadulterated *fun*!

The whole world of sex within the marriage framework demands an open-minded attitude, that permits uncritical acceptance of any suggestions either one of you may make aimed at increasing your mutuality. If your wife asks you to delay orgasm somewhat longer, you don't sulk in wounded pride, you try to lengthen your intercourse time. If you can't do it, see your physician; he has a bag full of tricks. If your husband indicates that a little more action on your part would be helpful, pitch in lady, pitch in. Your man isn't a beast, he's just interested in fun, and you should be interested as well.

The attitudes that both of you assume toward sex are precisely those you would take toward the rational solution of any problem. Remember that sexual pleasure is a *gift* that each of you can give to the other. Toward this pleasure, both of you should be willing to work. *Working* together is the solution. Complete success probably will not be immediately achieved so you should anticipate a coöperative working through of sex behavior until the process smooths out for you. Sexual happiness in marriage is a result obtained by the willingness and freedom with which you work at it. You should know that the wedding ceremony itself gives only social, legal and religious sanction to sex. The words: "I now pronounce you man and wife" contain no magic charms to solve problems for you. The job is yours; the ceremony but gives you the right to work at it.

In peace, Love tunes the shepherd's reed;  
 In war, he mounts the warrior's steed;  
 In halls, in gay attire is seen;  
 In hamlets, dances on the green.  
 Love rules the court, the camp, the grove,

And men below and saints above;  
For love is heaven and heaven is love.

—SIR WALTER SCOTT, *Lay of the Last Minstrel*

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## 10. HAPPINESS IN WORK

Even in the meanest sort of labor, the whole soul of man is composed into a kind of real harmony the instant he sets himself to work.  
—Carlyle, *Past and Present*

**T**OLSTOI SAID THAT MAN'S HAPPINESS LIES IN LIFE and that life lies in labor. This is essentially correct. Unhappiness in our work commonly but reflects a generalized unhappiness in our life. Still, this works both ways. Much too often, our dissatisfaction with life in general springs from the fact that we somehow have managed to get ourselves into the wrong vocational area. When we dislike our job, we find few things in life to admire.

It is of course true that anyone who has developed the habit of reacting to life with any of the ineffective behaviors found on the road to neurosis will be equally inefficient in his work. Job dissatisfaction may be a source of unhappiness or merely another expression of maladjustment in general. However, it matters relatively little whether we are talking about cause or effect; both conditions are unfortunate and both are preventable.

The task of finding a degree of happiness in his work has faced man ever since he began productive labor of any form. The question of a vocational choice, however, is a relatively recent development. Early man was not concerned greatly about it. He became a hunter, a fisher, a woodsman, or whatever, just as had his parents before him. Occupational opportunity was a function of the job into which he was born and in which he tended to stay throughout his lifetime. Work was inherited just as were material possessions. Demands were rather simple and the chief task was one of growing up and



staying alive. The question: "What do you want to be when you grow up?" was meaningless; everyone did much the same things in much the same way. It has been only during the past one hundred years that the question of vocational choice has taken on the status of a problem. Technological advance over this period has so diversified the work life and increased the complexity of our culture, that the question "What to do?" has become acute. Furthermore, it has been only within the last quarter century that we have had enough knowledge to do a decent job of assisting our youth in finding themselves vocationally.

### **VOCATIONAL CHOICE**

As with other areas in our lives, vocational choice usually is based in desire and wish instead of upon factual information. Despite the fact that our work, like our marriage, is a major factor in our life, our usual approach to it is haphazard, emotionally biased, and quite unrealistic. Commonly, the job choices that youth make are limited to the "socially approved" white-collar operations and seldom cover a range of more than a dozen or so specific jobs. The sad facts are that there is just no relationship between what our youth say they want to do and the actual opportunity for employment that exists in their chosen areas. Job selection, as it usually is made, becomes purely a game of chance. Nothing is planned, we only hope.

Although the white-collar group make up only about a third of our gainfully employed population, over 80 percent of our young people aspire to "office" work. College students prepare themselves for vocations with little regard for demand in the areas selected. They also rather complacently disregard questions of their own ability and quite commonly expect to start out receiving an income in excess of the known average for the job. Only a small minority obtain enough information about the work ahead to plan their approach and to get some realistic idea about their future. Most of them expect to enter the professions without seeming to realize that the professions

support a very small percent of our population. The general trend throughout our youth is one of hoping for an occupation that is higher on the socially approved list than the job most of them will have to accept. This hardly is evidence for basic rationality in man.

In this area, the home and the school truly are guilty. Wishful thinking, ignorance, and apathy dominate vocational selection by our young people. How may they make rational choice unless they have the facts, and how may they get the facts unless we adults (who call the shots in home *and* school) see to it that the necessary information is made available?

We know how the usual picture looks. Parents, concerned about the social prestige of certain vocations, try to steer children into them with total disregard for the abilities and the interests of the youngsters. Parents "want their child to amount to something." With such a desire, none of us can quarrel. However, *what* this amounting to something means quite often is confused by ego needs. As things well may work out, apparently these parents feel that it is better for the youth to fail in engineering school than to learn how to be a top-flight mechanic. In their Hollywood-clouded minds, no one who must wear overalls on the job amounts to *anything*.

This attitude, of course, but reflects general feeling within our society that working with one's hands is undesirable, inglorious, and to be avoided if at all possible. This general attitude was highlighted not too long ago when, after disaster had struck, it was shown that the working men involved had been treated quite contemptuously not only by management, but also by public and union officials.<sup>1</sup> As already has been indicated, we are a people who revere the voice-box. Somehow, we manage to assure ourselves that once we have discussed an issue, we therefore have resolved it. We seem to detect no differences between the *symbol* and the *thing*. Phonetics will overwhelm semantics whenever the two clash.

This general attitude is reinforced by our schools when they encourage youth to aspire to goals that may be impossible to

<sup>1</sup> J. Martin, The blast at Centralia No. 5: A mine disaster no one stopped, *Harper's Magazine*, March, 1948, pp. 193-220.

attain. About one-half of all occupations in our country demand no more education than the ability to read, write, and speak English, and perhaps to do simple arithmetic. Less than a quarter of our occupations demand a high school education. Well below 10 percent demand college training. Nevertheless, high school students in general are encouraged to take purely academic courses.

A study made in Baltimore showed that 52 percent of high school pupils were enrolled in academic or technical courses, while only 36 percent were taking commercial and vocational subjects. The facts are that academic and technical courses prepare students for occupations that make up but 15 percent of our gainfully employed, while 60 percent of such employees are making a living in commercial and vocational areas. About one-half of these students were being trained for occupations that were being done by only one-sixth of all metropolitan workers.<sup>2</sup>

### **EFFECTIVE TEACHING**

While scarcely rational, behavior like this is most typical of us. When the school attempts to prepare its youth for careers in which success is unlikely, the school does a serious misservice to society. There are those, of course, who would say that the school does not even do this wrong job efficiently. Nevertheless, quite as often as not, the school sees no need for vocational guidance and placement.

We say, or at least any professional educator will tell us, that education is a process of guidance that provides ways for dealing with the mental, physical, social, and emotional needs in life. If this is true, then there surely is a place for vocational guidance. Actually, it is difficult to understand how guidance can be separated from effective teaching. If teaching is to impart knowledge, then certainly the *facts* within any problem that students are being taught how to face should be utilized. Insisting that knowledge should be gained "for its own sake"

<sup>2</sup> H. Bell, *Matching Youth and Jobs*, Washington, American Youth Commission, 1940.

is to make an idol out of what should be no more than a tool. In any case, education should consider the desirability of purging itself of the moronic and complacent optimism that has characterized its behavior to date. Professional education also lives within an atmosphere of traditionally induced myth and superstition. It needs to get down to factual realities, to make its programs tough-minded and truth-seeking, to look and see what it can *do* to reduce the obsolete items in its inventory. Education talks and talks but gets very little done. The facts, the information, and the knowledge are all available; library shelves sag under the weight of material that has been accumulated. We prefer, it seems, to place faith in ignorance rather than to put labor into knowledge.

### **VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE**

Communities are no better. Very, very few incorporate a vocational guidance center within their sphere of communal activities. Yet, those communities that have done this job find hearty public approval, once people really understand what it all is about. Of course, if the vocational guidance center truly is to function, it must make use of full-time and adequately trained vocational counselors. These people cost money, and so to convince the tax-paying public that the whole thing is worth while can be quite a task. Unfortunately, most communities, looking at the apparent enormity of this *task*, turn their attention to less controversial projects. Once more it is the fears of the adult, not the needs of youth, that are served.

When an educational institution is permitted to hire a guidance counselor, altogether too frequently he is forced to do part-time teaching or given a load of administrative duties because no one quite knows what to do with him—and, of course, he must be kept busy. As a consequence, such counseling as he may be able to do is sandwiched in between a host of other activities. If often happens, therefore, that the school has a "vocational counselor" on the pay roll although the job itself simply is not getting done. This state of affairs commonly develops out of an enthusiastic but uninformed administra-

tion that feels a need but has not taken the time to discover exactly how the need best could be met. Vocational guidance programs much too often result from the feeling that "we must do something," without anyone, except the unfortunate counselor perhaps, having the vaguest idea of what to *do* about it all.

There is real need for and genuine value in giving vocational guidance early in life. The need appears dramatically when youth comes from school into the world of work and is faced with the task of finding a job. Bewilderment, confusion, ignorance, and disinterest seem to characterize these young people. They are untrained in work skills and unaware of work implications. To the question: "What can you do?"—they reply: "Anything." This, of course, means that they don't know how to *do* anything at all. It is not therefore surprising that job dissatisfaction should be highest among those of us who must work with our hands. We have not been prepared for anything in particular, yet we have to do the kind of work that people in general look down upon.

Job satisfaction seems to vary with the job, and employed persons report upon their relative happiness or unhappiness proportionately to the social prestige of the work they are doing. A national survey showed that 92 percent of the professional and executive group found their work interesting while only 54 percent of factory workers found interest in their jobs. In fact, 15 percent of workers said their jobs actually were "dull," but only 1 percent of the professional and executive population were bored.<sup>3</sup> Since the worker constitutes the great mass of our employed population, it can be a serious thing that nearly half of them do not find interest in their work. The probabilities are strong that this generalized dissatisfaction is a result of failure to attain the vocational goal that had been held up (by implication, at least) to these men before their workaday life began.

In any case, the amount of work unhappiness that exists is evidence enough that something is wrong with the ways in which we "select" our jobs. The facts are, of course, that we

<sup>3</sup> *Fortune*, January, 1947, 35: p. 10.

do not select our vocations in any realistic sense whatsoever. What we do in our work life usually is the result of wish, parental pressures, and pure circumstance. Neither the youth nor the parent ordinarily makes judgments of any adequacy at all. What we do often just happens to us. Although there are over 17,000 different ways of earning a living, most youth will indicate preferences that spread themselves over no more than sixty different occupations. Information and knowledge are so badly needed in this area that we ought to be frightened about it.

Much of our current job dissatisfaction could be decreased by intelligent vocational planning. The evidence at this point is clear and overwhelming. Persons who followed the suggestions growing out of vocational guidance programs were shown to be more than twenty-five times as likely to be happy in their work than were those persons who did not follow such advice. With college students, 90 percent of those who followed vocational recommendations made sound job adjustments, while only 22 percent of those who ignored the recommendations adjusted satisfactorily to the demands of their jobs. Of two groups of high school students, one counseled and one not counseled, the counseled group had attained higher occupational status ten years after graduation.<sup>4</sup> There is no question but that vocational counseling and personal counseling as well can assist youth in making more effective judgments when they come into the world of work. Lethargy, tradition, and superstition stand in the way. We can describe these three obstacles as follows:

1. "You can if you will."
2. Faith in self-estimates and family expectation.
3. Fear of and resistance to change.

Let us examine these false attitudes separately. We already have talked about the myth of "you can if you will," and we

<sup>4</sup>L. Cantoni, Emotional maturity needed for successful business, *Personnel J.*, October, 1955, p. 173; E. Hunt, and P. Smith, Vocational guidance research: 10 years' work by the Birmingham Educational Committee, *Occup. Psychol.* London, 1938, 12: 302-307; D. Paterson, "The Genesis of Modern Guidance" in *Frontier Thinking in Guidance*, Chicago, Sci. Res. Assoc., 1945; E. Webster, A follow-up of vocational guidance, *J. Appl. Psychol.*, 1942, 26: 285-295.

need but reaffirm its mythlike nature. You and I can do to whatever extent we may be *able* and no more. It is true that we can more closely approach our potentialities if we try hard, but none of us can succeed in any area for which we do not possess the basic and necessary abilities. It also is true that although we may not have enough intelligence to meet the known intellectual demands of a job, that we may get along in it nevertheless if we go all out in the effort. However, the dice are loaded against us and no smart gambler would "make a book" on the probabilities of our success. Whatever the case may be, when we accept these exceptions as the rule, we lay out a life pathway that usually leads only to embitterment. It is just not so that we humans can do anything we wish if only we work hard enough.

In terms of normal expectancy, superior intelligence is necessary for success in professional, managerial, and proprietary operations. At least average intellectual ability is demanded for success in semiprofessional work. The successful clerk, salesperson, and farmer must also have at least average ability. So too must those in the skilled labor and personal service areas. Persons with less than average intelligence can be successful in semiskilled, unskilled, domestic service and fishery activities. The relationships between various job demands and intellectual ability have been fairly well worked out and could be applied in vocational counseling situations if we were willing to do it.

Self-estimates and family expectations also are highly fallible guides to vocational success. Our own guesses about our characteristics and abilities are wide-open to error. When our estimates of ourselves are checked by estimates made by others of us, we are as likely to be wrong as right. This means that our own estimates really are just guesses; we could almost flip a coin and do as well. We already have said that insight is a rare attribute when its development is left purely to life experiences. However, we can develop self-understanding, although we have to work at the task.<sup>5</sup>

Our usual statement to the effect: "I know what I want to

<sup>5</sup> W. Brown, Developing Insight, *The Sales Manager*, October-December, 1954.

do" should be changed to: "I know what I *think* I want to do." This less definite statement immediately should be followed by: "But can I?" "Do I possess the necessary abilities?" "Am I willing to invest the time, effort, and money in the preparation that will be demanded?" "Will there be a spot for me in my chosen work when the preparatory effort is done?" Last but of equal importance: "Where can I find the answers?" Our work life should be a serious consideration for us; we certainly should be directed by a more stable guide than mere wish. The evidence is against the belief that we, ourselves, are competent judges of a vocational future.

One reason why vocational guidance is not more readily available to youth lies in our fear of and resistance to change. In the past, our educational institutions trained almost exclusively for the professions. Consequently, their orientation was entirely academic and cultural. Despite the present fact that the professions absorb a very small percent of the products of our educational institutions, schools and colleges still operate under the illusion that they must prepare scholars just as they did a hundred years ago. We have had occasion to observe before how doggedly old things cling to life. Demonstrably, dead practices continue to function in a zombielike state through our own inertia and our unfortunate ability to rationalize any act we are able to talk about. This is perhaps more true within the realm of Academia than within any other social institution. This will surprise only those of us who believe that man is a rational animal. Those of us who do so believe may be challenged to explain away the fact that feeling still controls behavior even within the ivy-covered halls. The rest of us know that man is still a man whether he be Ph.D. or plumber.

### VOCATIONAL COUNSELOR

The author was in attendance at a faculty meeting one time when the question of hiring a trained vocational counselor was put to the faculty body. Reactions were amusing and typical. One of the old-timers said in some asperity: "When I came here, we had one Dean and he carried a full-time teaching



load besides. Now we have four of them and they want to add another administrator!" The fact that needs might change over a twenty-year period seemed not to influence him at all. Another member of the same age group argued valiantly that since there never had been such a person employed and graduates had done very well, there now was no reason to indulge in such frills. Every objection raised was of just this nature—it wasn't necessary because it never had been used, so let's just keep things as they always have been. The past is known and therefore we are not concerned about it; let us change nothing in the future!

We have known for over two decades that, in general, our schools are better prepared to give years of inefficient education than they are to give minutes of effective guidance. As a people, we are unrealistic in love, in work, and in life, because we maintain a sluglike insistence that the past must forever foretell the future. Even if we cannot (and we probably should not) reduce the characteristic need of every American to "better" his condition, we at least should be able to learn how to enjoy our lives more adequately. Our constant effort to excel and its attendant, self-induced tensions, are basic to the increase of psychosomatic disorders. These tensions surely could be reduced by a more efficient adjustment within the work life. We can approach this adjustment, if not actually achieve it, by an intelligent application of the knowledge we have accumulated about the relationships between the make-up of the person and the demands of the job. About all we really need to do is to forget the fantasies that wishfulness has created and to learn the realities of fact.

### **MAN AND HIS JOB**

Let us have a look at the relationships between the man and his job. Once more, as when we examined the relationships between man and marriage, some questions present themselves. Some of these questions concern us as persons, others concern the work to be done. If our approach to a life vocation is to be made seriously, then both kinds of these questions must be answered honestly. You must remain ever alert to the wish-

fulness that will creep into your judgment. If you are honest, you will find the wish insidiously intruding itself as: "Well-I-I, I don't fit this exactly, but . . ." You can protect yourself against this human-enough-tendency by more thorough self-quizzing, in which you persistently demand: "Just what does 'exactly' mean?" "Just how wide *is* the gap between the job demand and my ability?" "If I am wanting in this particular, is it something that I can correct, or is it so firmly ingrained within me that effort to change would be just too great to make?" The basic question, to be kept in mind all the while is: "Am I trying to fool myself?"

Keeping in mind the necessity to do a considered and an honest job of aligning job demands with your own characteristics (and vice versa), ask yourself the following questions:

#### ABOUT YOU

1. What are the educational needs of individuals who are engaged in this occupation? Is my present educational status sufficient, or will I need more? If so, can I obtain it?
2. Is my intellectual ability sufficient to meet the educational and occupational demands this vocation makes of its participants? Will I be able to cope with such specialized training as may be expected of me?
3. What, if any, special abilities, talents, or aptitudes are requisite for success? If such exist, do I possess them? If not, is there any way by which I may?
4. Will my present array of interests, likes, dislikes, aims, and ideals be compatible with those needed for happiness in this work?
5. Is my general personality structure such that the work will be congenial? Will I fit in with those who are already so engaged? Does this work make any special personal or character demands? If so, what are they and how will I fit in?
6. Have I any annoying traits that might argue against success? Any deficiencies or disabilities that would limit me? If so, can I do anything to overcome them?

#### ABOUT YOUR JOB

1. What are the opportunities in this field? Where, in the range of income, must I start? What may I expect as my skill increases?

- If special rewards exist, what must I do to obtain them?
2. What about constancy of employment? Is it hazardous, seasonal, intermittent, or variable? What degree of personal security does it offer?
  3. Is it a blind alley job? Is advancement possible and regular if one does well? Is the job itself a kind of training program for better ones?
  4. What is the relationship between supply and demand in this work? Are more people being trained than the work can accommodate? Will I be faced with competition too strong for me to meet? Am I a good competitive worker, or do I become too discouraged with "second place?"
  5. In what kind of community will I probably be living if I enter this field? Will it be one well adapted to domestic living, the rearing of children, and the happiness of my spouse?
  6. What is the social prestige of the job? Does success in it bring approval by others? Are the skills demanded by the work those which "not just anyone" may develop?<sup>6</sup>

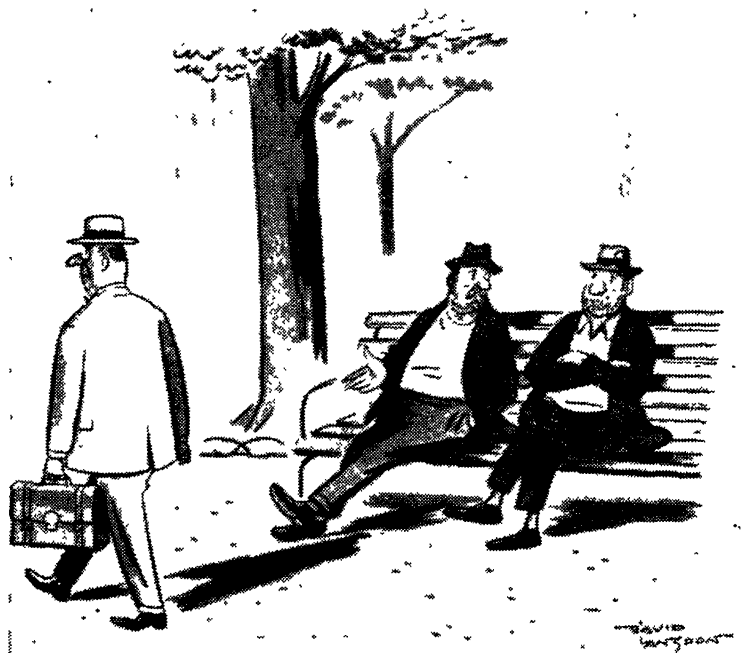
(Let it be said at once that this last question *must* be asked because of the strong variances in preferences for jobs current within our society and hence among youth. It must also be said that no one who has observed—or, better still, tried to do—the work of a stonemason, electrician, machinist, or plumber, would deny the very skilled and socially approvable nature of the task.)

We humans spend a major share of our lives in our work and in work-connected activities. In view of this fact, the choice of a vocation is not one lightly to be made. As you search for answers to the questions above, it will help to keep in mind some of the facts that are known to be related to job satisfaction. Any one of us who has made his choice and now has a job to do knows that he wants to be given credit for what he gets done, that when the task is interesting, it's more fun to do it, and that he wants to be understood, treated, and appreciated as a *person*. In general, when these highly personal satisfactions are not present, we dislike our work and are unhappy in it. As a consequence, if you are in search of a vocation, you must give serious consideration to such questions as:

<sup>6</sup> W. Bingham, *Aptitudes and Aptitude Testing*, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1937, p. 5.

"What do I expect from my work?" "Is *my* standard of success measured by money, prestige, responsibility, leisure time, the greatest return for the least output, or what?" "Do I produce more effectively when I'm put under pressure or when I can work in my own way?"

The general frame in which you view a life work is a very important factor, to be well considered as you move toward



"Do you know what he's carrying in that brief case? He's carrying worries and problems and troubles, that's what he's carrying."

FIGURE 19. Reproduced by permission. Corp. 1954 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

your decision. You *must* consider a prospective job in terms of what you expect that work will get for you. Perhaps you will find contentment in the freedom and lack of pressure that characterizes college teaching. Perhaps you will prefer the much greater potential income that industry has to offer, despite the pressures and tight organizational structures you

will encounter. Maybe you want a continuously increasing bank account; maybe only the things that money can buy are really important to you. Possibly, peace of mind takes precedence over all else for you. However the case, you should consider your future work in the light of the *value judgments* you have made about life in general.

With us, a great deal of attention is given to the factor of social prestige in our work lives. It is interesting to see how college students have ranked occupations in order of preference. The changes that occur in such rankings over a span of time are indications of shifts in the value judgments of our entire culture. Samples of such rankings, about twenty years apart, appear below:

ORDER OF OCCUPATIONAL PREFERENCES OF  
COLLEGE STUDENTS IN 1929 AND 1948

	1929 <sup>7</sup>	1948 <sup>8</sup>
Banker	1	6
Physician	2	1
Clergyman	3	8
Lawyer	4	2
Professor	5	5
Manufacturer	6	3
Artist	7	11
Man of leisure	8	16
Engineer	9	4
Factory manager	10	7
Schoolteacher	11	10
Merchant	12	9
Basketball player	13	17
Farmer	14	15
Insurance agent	15	12
Salesman	16	13
Bookkeeper	17	14
Machinist	18	18
Carpenter	19	19
Barber	20	21
Factory	21	20
Blacksmith	22	24
Soldier	23	22
Chauffeur	24	23
Ditch digger	25	25

<sup>7</sup> W. Anderson, Some social factors associated with the vocational choices of college men, *J. Educ. Sociol.*, 1932, 6: 110-113.

<sup>8</sup> L. Steckle, Unpublished study.

In these rankings, we can observe the emphasis our culture places upon the professions and "working with the mind" over the trades and "working with the hands." This emphasis is a cultural thing and not something caused by factors within the occupations themselves, despite what most of us seem to assume. When similar rankings were asked of Russian youth, they placed the trades relatively high and the professions relatively low as contrasted with the ratings of our college students.<sup>9</sup>

There is plague in both houses. In a theoretically vocationally balanced society, jobs just could not be ranked in an order of preference, because all of them would be equally "preferred" and no particular occupation would be "looked up to" anymore than any other. While we may recognize that the equalizing of occupational worth would be a good thing, we are faced with the fact that culturally determined job preferences do exist. Consequently, we must consider them in our vocational formula.

The place to begin this consideration is in the home. It should be obvious that vocational guidance centers are severely limited if, in the minds of the parents, only a professional career is worthy of their child. We as parents, therefore, must be willing to accept the possible fact that our child may become a medical technician or a nurse but not a physician; a salesman instead of an executive; an electrician or a mechanic rather than an engineer. We, *you and I*, must accept these realities and be willing to go along with them before vocational guidance really may come of age.

### OCCUPATIONAL GOAL

If, however, you will filter your own feeling for what you want out of a work life through a tightly woven mesh of factual information, you can do some things that will aid you in finding real happiness in the job. First of all, you need an occupational goal and the earlier you can reach this, the better. In

<sup>9</sup> R. Davis, Testing the social attitudes of children in the government schools in Russia, *Amer. J. Sociol.*, 1927, 32: 947-952.

orienting yourself to the work life, ask yourself whether you prefer to deal with things, people, ideas, or with some particular combination of these. Add to this a list of the courses you liked in school. Do these courses tend to center about cultural, literary, mechanical, scientific, humanistic, or interpersonal interests? Be very careful about snap judgments. Think things through and look for relationships between the things you enjoy doing and your courses in school. Out of an examination like this, you may obtain key ideas about your future vocation, because from it, you should get a fair understanding of the kind of things you can do, and find enjoyment in the doing.

When you have emerged a fairly realistic idea, ask yourself the question: "Where can I find a work pattern that fits the things I enjoy and can do?" You may be able to find the answer to your question within the list of jobs that follow. Although over 17,000 different ways of earning a living are known to exist, 75 percent of all workers are engaged in the following 150 occupations.<sup>10</sup>

If you examine these jobs in the light of your present knowledge of yourself, you may find several that you believe you could do well. Now your task is one of making a direct comparison between your personal make-up and the demands of the jobs. In general, success on a job is a function of three human characteristics:

1. Abilities
2. Interests
3. Motivation

Under the first of these, abilities, we shall include attributes like intelligence, special skills, and personality characteristics. If you wish clearly to see the relationship between your abilities and the demands of the job, you must have a reasonably clear understanding, realistically based, of your learning effectiveness, such mechanical, literary, clerical, artistic, manual, and social skills as you possess, and some insight into

<sup>10</sup> Taken from National Association of Manufacturers, *Your Future Is What You Make It*, 1947. Reproduced by permission.

the structure of your personality. A big order? Not too much, actually. All of these aspects of human behavior can be gotten at through tests and therefore the degree to which you possess them can be measured. At the very least, you can obtain a reasonably accurate picture of how well your abilities measure up to those demanded by the job in question. You will, of course, need technical help in obtaining this information about yourself. Somewhere near you, there is a school, college, university, clinic, or private practitioner where you can get the information you seek. You have only to search out the source you will need.<sup>11</sup>

## PROFESSIONAL

Actors  
Architects  
Artists  
Assayers, metallurgists  
Authors  
Chemists  
Clergymen  
Agricultural and home demonstration agents  
Dentists  
Editors, reporters  
Engineers, chemical  
Engineers, civil  
Engineers, electrical  
Engineers, industrial  
Engineers, mechanical  
Engineers, mining and metallurgical  
Lawyers, judges  
Librarians  
Musicians  
Nurses  
Personnel workers

Pharmacists  
Physicians, surgeons  
Public relations workers  
Social workers  
Teachers, professors, educational administrators  
Veterinarians  
Managers of filling stations  
Managers of hotels  
Managers of offices  
Managers of theaters, recreational services  
Managers of stores  
Officers, pilots, pursers, and engineers (ship)  
Officials, lodge, society, union  
Postmasters  
Public officials  
Purchasing agents, buyers

## SEMPROFESSIONAL

Athletes, sports officials  
Airplane pilots, navigators, meteorologists

<sup>11</sup> If you are uncertain or feel need for references, write to American Personnel and Guidance Association, 1534 O Street, Washington 5, D.C. This organization will send you its directory of reputable guidance agencies. Write also, and send twenty-five cents, to Public Affairs Pamphlets, 22 East 38 Street, New York 16, N.Y., and ask for *Psychologists in Action*.



Dancers, showmen  
Designers, draftsmen  
Funeral directors, embalmers  
Medical service workers  
Optometrists  
Photographers  
Radio operators  
Religious workers  
Surveyors  
Technicians, laboratory and  
others

CLERICAL, SALES AND  
KINDRED WORKERS

Accountants  
Agents and collectors  
Attendants, physicians' and  
dentists'  
Bookkeepers, cashiers  
Canvassers, solicitors  
Clerks  
Demonstrators  
Insurance agents and brokers  
Mail carriers  
Messengers, office boys and girls  
Office machine operators  
Real estate agents and brokers  
Salesmen  
Shipping and receiving clerks  
Secretaries, stenographers,  
typists  
Telegraph and telephone  
operators  
Stationary engineers, cranemen  
Structural and ornamental  
metal workers  
Tailors, furriers  
Tinsmiths, coppersmiths, sheet-  
metal workers  
Upholsterers

OPERATIVES

Brakemen and switchmen, rail-  
road  
Chauffeurs, truck drivers  
Dressmakers, seamstresses  
Laundry workers  
Miners  
Motormen  
Oil- and gas-well workers  
Operatives in occupations listed  
under "Craftsmen"  
Sailors, deck hands  
Street-railway workers  
Telephone and telegraph line-  
men  
Welders, flame cutters

DOMESTIC SERVICE WORKERS

Housekeepers, private family  
Laundresses, private family  
Servants, private family

PROTECTIVE SERVICE WORKERS

Firemen  
Guards, watchmen, doorkeepers  
Marshals, constables, sheriffs,  
bailiffs  
Policemen, detectives  
Soldiers, sailors, airmen

FARMERS AND FARM MANAGERS

Farmers (owners and tenants)  
Farm managers

PROPRIETORS, MANAGERS AND  
OFFICIALS

Advertising agents  
Buyers and department heads,  
store  
Buyers and shippers of farm  
products

## 280 *Problems of Human Adjustment*

Conductors, railroad	Pressmen
Credit men	Rollers and roll hands, metal
Foremen, supervisors	Roofers, slaters
Inspectors, government	Sawyers
Managers of buildings	Shoemakers and repairers
Managers of industries	
CRAFTSMEN	
Bakers	Attendants, filling stations and parking lots
Blacksmiths	Attendants, hospitals
Boilermakers	Barbers
Cabinetmakers	Beauticians, manicurists
Carpenters	Cooks
Compositors, typesetters	Elevator operators
Decorators, window dressers	Housekeepers, except in private family
Electricians	Janitors and sextons
Electrotypers, stereotypers, photoengravers	Porters
Glaziers	Ushers
Inspectors in industries	Waiters
Jewelers, watchmakers	
Locomotive engineers, firemen	LABORERS
Machinists, millwrights, tool-makers	Farm laborers
Masons, brick, stone, and tile	Fishermen and oystermen
Mechanics, repairmen	Gardeners
Millers	Garage laborers, car washers and greasers
Molders, metal	Longshoremen and stevedores
Opticians	Lumbermen
Painters	Road-building and repair workers
Paper hangers	Teamsters
Pattern and model makers	Unskilled laborers
Plasterers, cement finishers	
Plumbers, gas and steam fitters	

Once you have obtained a reasonable approximation of your abilities, you can begin to line yourself up with the qualifications of the jobs you feel you would enjoy. At this point, the assistance of a competent vocational guidance counselor will be highly valuable to you. However, you can determine many of the basic relationships for yourself. Any good school

library will have a vocational guidance section. Search through it will give you material about the particular demands of the special occupations in which you're interested. A little "library research" can pay off handsomely for you.

Furthermore, the probabilities are that you will know someone, or at least can get in touch with someone, who is now doing the job itself. Go to such people and ask them about their work demands. If you can, spend some time with them, observe what they have to do to make the job click, what expectations they must meet, and, in general, the kind of work life they lead. Better still, see if you can sell them on the idea of using you as a part-time assistant. Offer yourself just for the experience you can gain and give of your time after classes, week ends, and during other periods of leisure. If you can work out a deal of this kind, the gains you achieve are that you will have chances to see the job in *most* of its aspects and will therefore be less likely to become impressed with some single, and possibly rare, condition of the work.

An overall examination of this kind can be of tremendous importance to you. Much too often, we are influenced by aspects of a job that actually are of little importance in it. We may be blinded by apparent glamour and fail to see the work as it really is. Many a prospective nurse has found her training experience more than she could tolerate. She may have visualized nursing as a "laying on of hands" and as a bringing of comfort to the ill. What she did not consider was the bedpan, the cleaning up after surgery, and the cantankerous patient. The prospective lawyer may be disappointed as well. He may conceive of law as a battle of wits in the courtroom and fail to recognize the hours of pouring over references and plodding through past cases that well may precede the trial. Consider teaching. Looks like an easy way to make a living, doesn't it? There are long vacations, the teaching hours themselves are brief, your job is to impart information, and in this imparting you get to "tell" people what the facts really are. However, think also about the problems of class preparation, the grading of papers, the committee obligations, and the conflict you may find between what the administration insists upon and what

you believe should be done. The life of the physician may appeal. There is prestige in it, you can do a lot of good, and be a real help to your fellow man. But think too of the years of preparation that are required, the night calls, the grave responsibilities when your judgment may determine life or death, and the subservience of the person to the group that the profession demands. No matter what the job that you have under consideration, be sure to obtain a *complete* picture of the work in all its phases. The more you can *know* about the job and about yourself in relation to it, the more adequate your decision will be.

The second term, interests, implies the question: "What are the things in life that you *like* to do?" Your interest pattern, the things you like to do, can be important to your happiness on the job. It is known that successful people in the various occupations tend to possess interest patterns in common. Furthermore, these patterns are different for different jobs. Thus, for example, the interest pattern of the physician will differ from that of the dentist, and both will vary from that of the lawyer. Interest patterns of the engineer, mechanic, author, musician, and others are recognizable and known. These relatively stable patterns of preferences can be defined and measured. Consequently, it is a standard practice to determine the interest pattern of a person and then to compare his individual picture with the known interest patterns of various occupational groups. When general agreement is found between the person's interests and the occupational pattern, there is reason to believe that this person will be compatible with others in this field, he will get along with his colleagues, and his probabilities of contentment in this kind of work are increased. Obviously, if the things you like and enjoy are badly out of line with the things most of your working associates like, you just will not fit in. You will be out of step with the rest of your occupational group. Happiness in work depends a lot upon feelings of belongingness. It is important, therefore, that you should like to do the things that usually are enjoyed by others in your work group. Communal interests

promise friendly and pleasant interpersonal relations. The "fish out of water" is a no-good deal; do what you must to avoid it. Here again, you will be well advised to go to a competently trained person for your information.

We know that by the time youth has reached the age of fifteen or sixteen, his interest pattern has stabilized enough that vocational guidance can be based upon it. We also know that at least one-third of our sixteen- and seventeen-year-old youngsters are employed. Since interest patterns can be an effective guide to job contentment, they should be used in helping youth to find the right work. At the level of high school and college, we very badly need adequate vocational guidance programs. The need undoubtedly is there, but we also need less talk and more action in meeting it.

Vocational guidance done on the basis of compatibility of interests can have real pay-off in dollars in your pocket. Furthermore, we have known this for a long time. Two older sources of this knowledge can suffice to illustrate. Life insurance salesmen whose interests were highly compatible were shown to be ten times more likely to sell \$150,000 worth of insurance a year than were those salesmen whose interests were incompatible. Another study found that of those insurance salesmen who scored high in compatibility, 78 percent were rated as fair or outstanding, while 22 percent were rated as failures by their managers. Of those salesmen who scored low in compatibility, 24 percent were given fair or outstanding ratings while 76 percent were rated as failures.<sup>12</sup> While we could illustrate the value of tests in vocational guidance and employee selection many, many times over, these will serve the point. The fact is that the probabilities of job happiness and job success can be increased through the application of test procedures.<sup>13</sup> Any young adult can be helped toward a

<sup>12</sup> M. Bills, Relation of scores on Strong's Interest Analysis Blank to success in selling Casualty Insurance, *J. Appl. Psychol.*, 1938, 22: 97-104; E. Strong, Interests and sales ability, *Personn. J.*, 1934, 13: 204-216.

<sup>13</sup> A. Hilton, S. Bolin, J. Parker, E. Taylor, and W. Walker, The validity of personnel assessments by professional psychologists, *J. Appl. Psychol.*, 1955, 39: 287-293.

more adequate vocational adjustment if we are willing to spend the time and effort necessary to apply available techniques.

The third aspect of job success, motivation, asks the question: "Do you really *want* to do this kind of work?" The answer to this can, and should, arise out of the information you have obtained from your investigation into your abilities and interests. If you have made a serious attempt to discover what people *do* when engaged on the job in question, you are in a position to answer the question asked by motivation. If you are not being blinded by glamour nor yet judging in terms of inadequate information, you should know enough about the work to estimate the probabilities of success. Keep in mind that although you do not fit all requirements exactly, you can compensate to some degree through extra effort. So, *if you really want* this kind of work, give it a whirl. So long as your probabilities of success are greater than a fifty-fifty break, you have a chance, and real desire to do the job may shape the die in your favor. In any case, you simply cannot ask for *certainly*—the only certainties we humans face are death and change—but you can hope for reasonable *probability* of success. Life may be a gamble, but we are fools indeed if we do not do everything we can to turn the odds in our favor. There are ways to reduce the influence of the element of chance, and we're a little stupid if we fail to use them. The question is perhaps: "Why leave your work life to the fickleness of impulse under the guidance of chance, when you can base your decision on judgment and probability?"<sup>14</sup>

### **BUILDING HABITS OF WORK**

Once you have made a decision about your life work, several additional questions will arise. "What may you do to get the kind of work you want?"; "Within the work area, where do the greatest opportunities exist for you?"; "Is one organization 'better' than another *for you*?" Here again, tried and

<sup>14</sup> See—Aptitude tests: Can they steer you to success? *Changing Times*, February, 1955, pp. 19–22.

tested procedures are available to you. As we get into them, you will see that within the work life, as in all other life areas, success is most likely to attend the person whose direction of life is you-oriented. Your best bet for getting what you want out of your job lies within the potential your new brain offers you. Success in interpersonal relations (and, like it or not, your job effectiveness will depend upon just such relationships) largely is a function of how well you can subordinate your own ego-needs to the demands of your organization.

On the job, opportunity generally goes to the man who is prepared to accept it. A respectable amount of this preparation begins during your school years. You may feel that the grades you get are but paper "credits" that approximate the amount of energy you have expended, but you will discover that your grades may be regarded as an indication of your willingness to work. Furthermore, the willingness to *work* will receive a premium in modern-day business and industrial companies. Don't be fooled by accounts of the exception; any management will pay off handsomely for intelligent effort.

You should know that, whether from high school or college, your grades are likely to be interpreted by a prospective employer as evidence of your ability to work, to learn, and to *use* what you know. Your grades well may turn out to be much more important to you than you probably think. Other things being relatively equal (such as experience, personality, general impression), the job will go to the candidate who presents the best academic record.

There is danger in "just getting by." If you do not, in school, demonstrate what you can do, you may unnecessarily handicap yourself when you begin to look for work. You will discover to your dismay, that your work life will demand hard and continuous effort. You cannot succeed in it, as you may in school, by being one-half right. As a general trend, those youth who do best in school also attain the highest responsibilities in work. You will hear about all kinds of exceptions to this, but this rule is a fact. You can prove it to yourself the hard way or you can accept it and begin to train yourself to work right now, whatever your wish may be. This fact remains: If edu-

cation, in any real sense at all, is part of the preparation for your work life, then it is only good sense to get as much from it as you possibly can.

Hand in hand with your educational preparation goes preparation in your personal characteristics. You already are familiar with the characteristics that make for a healthy personality as well as those that lead down the road to neurosis. Look them over again. Do what you can to incorporate the healthy ones and to avoid the traps the unhealthy ones set for you.

### **VALUABLE PERSONALITY TRAITS**

At this point, we shall emphasize the importance of desirable personality traits to job success. In this discussion, the basic principle simply is this: "The difference between your success and your failure on the job will rest in your willingness to get along with your fellow man." In at least three-quarters of all job failures, the basic fault lies in an inability of the person to get along with people. When the reasons for job failure are analyzed carefully, it usually is found that about nine out of every ten men who fail do so because of lacks in interpersonal skills. The odd person has failed because of lacks in technical knowledge. While you cannot, of course, sell a good personality to the exclusion of technical know-how, if you are reasonably competent in the techniques of your job, you can parlay effective social skills into much greater opportunity than sheer technical knowledge will bring you. On the job, as everywhere in life, the *whole person* is involved.

Business and industry are vitally interested in the trained person who also brings with him such traits as coöperativeness, dependability, alertness, cheerfulness, willingness, and honesty. In fact, the interest shown in these characteristics will be every bit as great as that shown in experience and training. Increasingly, industry is making use of procedures designed to tell them in advance of hiring what kind of a *person* they are buying as well as what he may have to offer technically. A whole new area for the professional psychologist is springing



up to meet this growing need. Directors of Engineering, instead of looking only at the quality of an applicant's training and experience are asking the question: "What *kind* of a fellow is he?" We have come a long way from the time when sheer technical know-how was the only requirement in the thinking of employers. We already have seen how inefficiently intelligence and ability function when they are carrying a heavy overburden of emotion. Success in any life area demands the freedom to behave smoothly with as little of the impeding effect of the inertia of the old brain as possible.

The picture of the effective manager in business and industry has been drawn many times. A recent one looks as follows:

1. He believes in a supreme being to whom he is responsible and whose laws he must obey.
2. He believes that he owes to himself maximum self-development and to others maximum service.
3. He uses his authority over others wisely, moderately, and with a degree of humility.
4. He does all he can to encourage a dual goal in his subordinates; maximum productivity and maximum self-development.
5. He believes in maximum delegation and considers himself to be primarily a teacher, motivator, and catalyst.
6. He is sure that the activity of people working together is one of life's most rewarding experiences—and this belief is basic to his attitudinal and value structure.<sup>15</sup>

These "rules" *are* human relations. If you are to obtain more output from a group of people than they are likely to produce for someone else, you must give freely of yourself to them. You'll have to worry with them, think with them, learn with them, play with them, and *work with* them. If you do the job right, you will find yourself devoting your life to the interests and welfare of others. In this way, and in this way only, can you get them to reach the goals established by your leadership.

<sup>15</sup> R. Henderson, The attitudes and values of managers, Talk before Branch Managers, Nationwide Insurance Company, January, 1956.

**LANDING DESIRABLE JOB**

Assuming however, that you know what you want to do, why you want to do it, and what you hope to attain through it, what can you do to land the job in mind? Strategic planning that makes use of techniques known to be effective will be of great value to you. First of all, consider what may be involved in the task of selling yourself (and you will have to *sell* yourself) to a prospective employer. You must face the fact squarely that he owes you nothing. *You* must show *him* that he needs you in his organization. A much too common error is found in the usual tendency to think only about your own needs and desires and consequently to talk only about yourself.

During some time spent in the personnel department of a large manufacturing company, the writer had the opportunity of assisting in the interviewing of applicants. Man after man would come in and spend nearly all of his interview in detailing reasons why he had to have a job. In over two weeks of daily contacts with this situation, no prospective candidate once gave evidence of having considered what he might have to offer the company. Toward the end of the interviews, the personnel manager's patience had worn badly. Complete breakdown in his tolerance occurred when a man, known to have a poor work record, pled in some emotion that the company had to give him a job because: "I have nine children." The personnel manager's reply is unprintable but indicated strongly that the company was more interested in initiative on the job than in procreative ability. Brutal though it was, it was but an expression of patience overwhelmed by men who could or would not regard work beyond the needs of their personal feelings.

In interviewing applicants for executive positions, the picture all too commonly is the same. In response to the request: "Tell me about yourself," there comes a flood of ego-demands, personal interests, and wishes. It is not unusual to know within the first fifteen minutes of such an interview that this candidate is a bad risk. His behavior clearly demonstrates that he principally is interested in what the job will give *him*; the concept of what he may have to offer the job is a distinctly secondary consideration. In a growing enthusiasm, he may relate anecdotes about how *he* "showed the boss," how experience had "proved him right," how he knew the

answers, and took very little from anyone. A portrait emerges of a person who uses managerial authority to bolster and inflate his own ego. In so far as the interviewer may be concerned, this man does not get the job.

As a general rule, employers are quite disinterested in what you *want*, but they may be highly interested in what you can *give* them. As in any selling situation, a need for the product must be established before it has a chance of being sold. The product you have to sell is made up of your training, your experience, and your personality. In order to sell it, you must first create a need, or at least an interest. This you can do if you are willing to put out a little effort.

It really is only fair play that you should look at your own potential contributions in the light of the needs of your prospective employer. It always is an unfortunate possibility that you don't have a thing he wants, and you can save yourself embarrassment by examining the situation in advance. In any case, he has the potential opening, you have to show him that you're the man to fill it. He is rather unlikely to accept your unsupported word. Now, if you already have studied yourself in the light of the demands of the job you want, your task is to present the relationships your study has unearthed in a manner that will demonstrate that you have a real *interest* in the job and that you are *willing to work* on it. We will describe ways to achieve this under three headings:

1. The letter of application
2. The interview
3. The maintenance of contact

Most of us can write a reasonably adequate letter. In general our grammar and spelling are passable. In short, the probabilities are that you can express yourself in writing with reasonable skill. So, when you write your letter of application, be yourself within the limits we are about to describe. Most employers are relatively unimpressed with the clever turn of or the play on words. Furthermore, they are not particularly interested in you as an individual, but they are interested in what you can contribute to the efficient and economical

operation of their businesses. Your letter of application should stress what you have to give, not what you want. There are ways of doing this. As an illustration of what *not* to do, read the letter reproduced (with identifying information deleted) below. Keep in mind that this letter was written by a college senior of real ability, who had demonstrated in his social contacts that he also was a real person. In writing this letter, he just didn't think, and he had not taken the trouble to study letter of application writing techniques.

Mr. John R. Doe  
Director of Personnel  
Blank Manufacturing Co.  
Metropolis, U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Doe:

It has been brought to my attention that there is a position open in your department in which I might be interested. I wish, therefore, to make application for it.

I am a senior at College University, majoring in Personnel Administration and will graduate with the B.A. degree in two months. While attending this institution, I have taken courses in Economics, Government, Sociology and Psychology which, with the many courses in my major area, I am certain would be of great value to me in my work with you.

At college, I have been active in numerous extra-curricular activities and have been a high officer in my fraternity the past year. Academically, my work has averaged in the above-average category. My health is excellent and I meet people easily and well.

I shall be much interested in talking with you about the opportunities within your organization.

Sincerely yours,

Fortunately, this letter was not mailed. Had it been, the first sentence in it would have been enough to get it consigned to File No. 13 that is found beside every office desk and that the custodian empties every night. The general tone of this

letter implies that any organization would be most fortunate to have this student on its staff. Notice how much more often "I" and "my" appear in contrast to "you" and "your." Unfortunately, the egocentric style of this letter is more the rule than the exception.

The purpose of the letter of application is to obtain an interview. Consequently, there should be a reasonable assurance that the letter will be read. The letter also should contain enough information about you so that the prospective employer can determine whether or not an interview is worth his time. With these facts in mind, this letter was rewritten in the form below:

Mr. John R. Doe  
Director of Personnel  
Blank Manufacturing Company  
Metropolis, U.S.A.

Dear Mr. Doe:

Your personnel practices seem to me to be the most adequate of any within the Metropolis area. Because I feel that your department is an effective one, and I very much would like to locate in Metropolis, I am particularly anxious to be granted an interview with you concerning the possibilities of employment in your organization.

Enclosed for your convenience is a summary of my education, military and work experience, including a recent photograph, and other pertinent information which, I trust, will give you a quick and general description of my qualifications and background.

Although my graduation from College University will not take place until next June, I am writing to you at this time in the hope that an interview with you may be possible during the coming school vacation. I shall be in Metropolis from March 28th to April 3rd inclusive, and will take the liberty of contacting you during this interval, if I do not hear from you before then.

I shall greatly appreciate any suggestions you may care to offer.

Sincerely yours,

## 292 *Problems of Human Adjustment*

The enclosed material referred to in the above letter appeared as follows:

### PERSONAL EXPERIENCE DATA

June 1939	Graduated from Feedur High School, Metropolis, U.S.A.
Aug. 1939	Kull's Market, 119 Ford St., Metropolis, U.S.A.
Oct. 1940	Clerk and delivery-truck driver Salary: \$13.00/week
Nov. 1940	Restorf and Son Dairy Company, Elm St., Metropolis, U.S.A.
Dec. 1941	Route-Salesman Deliver and collect on a 300-customer milk route Solicit new business Salary: \$35.00/week
Jan. 1942	Tanlac Refining Company, 75 Consumer St., Metropolis, U.S.A.
Sept. 1942	Training School (1 month) Manager of Service Station (4 mos.) Commission-Dealer (6 mos.) Operate station on commission basis without supervision Earnings: \$55.00-\$60.00/week
Sept. 1943	Enlisted in U.S. Navy
Oct. 1943	Bulldozer operator in Seabees Two promotions to Machinist's Mate 3/C Selected for officer training

(Numbers represent credit-hours)

<i>Psychology</i>	<i>Economics</i>
2 General Psychology	6 Principles and Problems
3 Industrial Psychology	3 Corporate Organization and Finance
3 Personnel Counseling	3 Labor Economics
2 Personnel Testing	3 Elementary Accounting
3 Problems in Personality	3 Intermediate Accounting
3 Social Psychology	
<i>Government</i>	<i>Miscellaneous</i>
8 Business Law	3 Public Speaking
3 National Government	3 Journalism
3 State Government	3 Social Statistics
	6 Sociology

In addition to the above are 72 credit-hours of Navy V-12 training in preengineering. Largely mathematics and science.

My work at Midshipman's school was made up entirely of Naval Sciences. On a 4-point scale, my overall grade average is 3.2.

There is an important difference between these two letters. In the second, much greater emphasis is placed upon the organization with which employment is sought. There is a corresponding decrease in sheerly personal desire. Furthermore, educational, experiential, and personal information are summarized on separate sheets instead of being condensed into vague form in the body of the letter itself. Enough information is presented so that an employer can make a decision about the worth of an interview. This information also is presented in clear and readable form. Evidence of effectiveness is found in the fact that this general form of application was sent to four companies and four interviews were obtained. Out of these four interviews came three offers of employment.

If your letter of application fulfills its function and obtains an interview for you, it is essential that you prepare for this interview. The employment interview offers both applicant and employer an opportunity to examine each other against a backdrop of mutual interests. The assumption behind the interview is that each has something to offer the other and that a mutually advantageous agreement may be reached. You should go to the interview with full knowledge of what the company has to offer you, so your task is to present yourself in such a light that an employer will recognize that you have something to offer him. To effect this, you will need to make specific preparations.

First of all, be certain that your personal appearance is as pleasant as you can make it. Play this role quietly, do not overdress. Just be careful to make sure that your clothes are neat, clean, and pressed. Have your shoes shined, your face and hands clean, and obey the advertising insistence upon personal hygiene. Be polite, self-assured, and as calm as you can.

We said that you should be self-assured. While it is easier to

tell a person this than to get it into his behavior, self-assurance is a direct function of feelings of confidence. You can develop these feelings of adequacy by preparing yourself to handle the kind of questions you may be certain to encounter. Anticipate



**"Let's see, I've had one week's experience at Hagley and Company, two days at Farson Brothers, half an hour at Beglo Company..."**

FIGURE 20. Reproduced by permission of the artist, Bill Mittlebeeler.

that you will be asked personal questions such as: "Tell me about yourself."; "Do you have to work for a living?"; "Why do you want to work for us?"; "Do you have any relatives now employed by us?"; "How do you feel that you can help us?"; "Do you know what we expect from our employees?"; "How does your wife feel about your working for us?"; "How much



money will you need?"; "How important is money to you?"; "Do you save regularly?"; "How much life insurance do you carry?"; "Why do you want to leave the job you now have?"; "What would you like to be doing five or ten years from now?"; "How will working for us help you get what you want from life?"; "Have you ever lost a competition?—how did you feel about this?"; "What ambitions does your wife have for you?"; "Are you in debt?"; "What do you like about work?—what do you dislike about it?"; "What kinds of things disturb you?"; "What courses were most difficult for you in school?—what were easiest?"; "What, as you see them, are your strengths and weaknesses?"; "What do you like to do in your spare time?"; "What ways are effective in getting along with people?—what ways are ineffective?"; "How would you approach a person to make a friend of him?"

Be prepared for these questions, for any variety of them, and many more. You must expect to be questioned and you very well may be questioned closely. The more accurately you can anticipate what you may be asked, the more confident you will feel during the interview. You must also expect to be asked something you have not anticipated, so plan on having to organize your thinking on the spot; expect to have to "think on your feet." Also, realize that you probably will be nervous. All of us are in strange situations, but we can *learn* not to show it too much. In any case, the more efficient your preparation has been, the less the situation will be strange to you, and therefore the less your nervousness.

During the interview, speak clearly and evenly. Answer questions asked you fully, but do not ramble. Let the interviewer *direct* the conversation, but be prepared to make an accurate and honest statement of what you believe you have to offer. Be confident, but do not brag. If you have some qualifications that you feel have been overlooked, talk about them. Further, if *you* have questions that do not get answered, ask them! Don't leave the interview with unanswered questions in your mind. The interview is designed as a meeting of minds to mutual advantage. As a consequence, do not disregard *any* aspect of the job or yourself that may be important. The em-

ployer has a right to know about you and your qualifications; you have a right to know the demands of the job and what your future on it may be.

Common errors that young job seekers make in an employment interview are these:

1. An obvious lack of assurance and self-confidence by the applicant.
2. Disregard for obvious rules such as "No Smoking" signs.
3. Overacting. Trying to give an impression that they are something they quite obviously are not.
4. Carelessness in grooming and make-up.
5. Gum chewing.
6. Failure to fill out the application blank completely and accurately.
7. Refusal to talk freely during the interview.
8. Running a bluff.
9. Failure to be polite and civil.
10. Inability to "sell" self.

All of these failures arise out of carelessness, ignorance, and fear. None of them are unavoidable. All of them may be removed or reduced by active preparation for the interview. Just as marketing research studies both the product and the potential market, so too must you, as a job aspirant, discover what your best selling points are, where they may most readily be sold, and what kind of an approach best may sell them. When you fail to make deliberate preparation for an employment interview, you pit your ignorance against the knowledge of the interviewer, and you're a sure bet to lose. No amateur ever had much luck against professional competition.<sup>16</sup>

Keep in mind the possibility that, despite your preparation, you may not be hired. There are no certainties, you can but increase the probability of your success. Just don't let failure discourage you. Remember that the great majority of sales are not made on the first call but rather on the fifth or sixth. So, if no offer of employment is made and even if it is suggested that you do not meet the general job requirements, try to leave

<sup>16</sup> See: Why they didn't get the job, *Changing Times*, March, 1955, pp. 15-18.

the door open for future consideration. Don't *feel* that you have failed entirely; just feel that you made a try, it didn't work out this time, but you'll have another chance. Of course, you should not depend upon only one string to your bow. You should investigate several employment possibilities. After each interview, if you believe that you have made a reasonably favorable impression, follow up, in a telephone call or a letter, with a request for another discussion a few days later. In job hunting, it is very important to keep your contacts thinking about you and aware that you are available. In achieving this, ordinary politeness and courtesy will pay real dividends. You should not be surprised to learn that many a person has been hired just because of his *persistence* in trying to get the job.

If you have made use of recommendation by others in obtaining an employment interview, it is only courtesy to send a brief note of thanks to those who may have recommended you. Similarly, it may be quite helpful to send a line of gratitude to the interviewer, that expresses your appreciation of his interest and time. In this, you can reaffirm your interest in his organization and your wish to work with him. The letter of appreciation is just smart business whether or not it looks as though you may go to work for the company. Pleasant interpersonal relations always will pay off for you, and you never know exactly whom your friends may be. Even though a particular company has no slot for you, if the interviewer thinks kindly of you, he may open doors for you elsewhere—doors you might not be able to get through all by yourself. Maintain your contacts, try to develop more of them, and keep them all on a congenial basis. In job hunting, you simply cannot afford to indulge a sensitive ego; in fact, you cannot afford to indulge a sensitive ego—period!

### **KEEPING THE JOB**

Getting the job is only the introduction to the work life. The problems of keeping the job and of getting promotions within it face you now. Once more, there are known ways to meet

these tasks. First of all, be willing to put time and effort into your work. Try to cultivate genuine interest in what you are given to do. Learn your job completely, so that you do it so well that your efficiency must be recognized. Demonstrate by your efforts that you can be depended upon to do a job given to you without constant supervision. Despite a lot of propaganda to the contrary, the willingness to work still finds premium in business and industry.

There are certain things you can do that will increase the probability of promotion coming to you. There are certain characteristics that will pay off for you. One of the most important of these is trustworthiness. Your employer has a right to expect that you will give your best every day you're on the job. Your constancy of performance, your dependability, will have greater long-term gains for you than sporadic flashes of genius. Establish a reputation for dependability by being on time and working each and every day. Don't let the attitudes of the "wise guys," the chaps who have all the angles figured, influence your behavior. Do your job, do it well, get it done on time, and burn up a little energy. Give value for the pay you get.

As long as you are exchanging your energy for a pay check, be loyal to your organization. Keep organizational affairs within the company; don't carry them into the neighborhood bar. Do not deprecate your employer, your fellow workers, or company policy. If you are not satisfied with your working conditions, if company policy is opposed to your convictions, you should work somewhere else, in all fairness to your organization and to yourself. As long as you are associated with an organization, however, you owe your loyalty, your fidelity, and your allegiance to it.<sup>17</sup>

On the job, don't permit your courtesy to slip. Remember all that has been said about "you-orientation" and its role in effective adjustment. Keep your interpersonal relations on a friendly and cheerful level. This will *get you more*; more of *your* ego needs will be met through consideration for the other fel-

<sup>17</sup> See: Ten rules for getting along with the boss, *Changing Times*, May, 1955, pp. 19-21.

low than through all the personal feelings you could express for the rest of your life. Remember that about 90 percent of all job failure occurs because somebody's ego gets in his way. Be coöperative, go the extra mile, and do a little more than you must just to get by. Your fellow workers are people and they react to courtesy and consideration just as you do. Ask yourself: "What would *I* like to have done at this point if this were *my* business?" Act in terms of your answer.

Within the organization, set a goal for yourself. Ask yourself where you want to go and then find out what it will take to get there. When you have the necessary information, put it to work. Realize that while a near-lifetime of effort may be essential, you know where you're going and how to get there. Use some of your spare time in furthering your education and in studying your job. Read the technical journals that apply to your work, talk with people who know their way around, and keep yourself alert for ways to make yourself more effective or to make the job easier. There always are ways to do any job more efficiently, but you won't find them in dreams. You may find them, however, in *work*. Let your motto be: "Service undivided or none!"

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# 11. THE SEARCH FOR GOD

What doth the Lord require of thee, but to  
do justly, and to love mercy and to walk  
humbly with thy God.

—Micah 6:8

**M**AN'S TECHNOLOGY STANDS AS A STALWART MONUMENT to his quest for control of life and his search for certainty within it. In this quest, he has not limited himself to the world of things and people. As an extension of the drive for self-preservation or growth that lies behind his technological advances, man eternally has sought for ways to defeat death. Technologically, he has been able to put off the advent of the Grim Reaper for decades as he has learned how to live longer and longer. But Death always has a way, somehow, of being just around any life corner. Death is a constant "threat" in the lives of all of us. It is one of the two *certainties* (the other, you will remember, is *change*) that we all can expect from living. Out of his fear of the black blankness brought by that ultimate in sleep man terms "Death," he has struggled ceaselessly for a measure of certainty in an area where his finest of techniques cannot probe. His efforts to look within this area have brought him little beyond a continually growing series of question marks. He *knows* no more now than he did many thousands of years ago.

In his attempts to describe to what this ultimate in life may lead, he has formulated many concepts through which a kind of guarantee of life after death might be obtained. Some of these solutions hinge upon finding death in an aggressive defense of a particular concept, others are to be found in a passive acceptance of whatever life may bring. Still others call for a retreat into the self where the earthly life is spent in

withdrawn contemplation, whereas another necessitates an active protesting of the right to eternal life through a series of stereotyped behaviors. (Here again, we see the three human tendencies to move against people, away from people, and toward people.) Just about every religion, preliterate and literate alike, bears directly upon the maintenance of some kind of personal integrity within some kind of world after death.

As example, the ancient Egyptian believed that the soul left the body at death but would return to reanimate the body at some future time. The body was therefore preserved, and food and weapons were buried with it so that the soul might be sustained and protected during its journey in the afterworld. The ancient Greeks believed that the life in the afterworld was spent in pining for the world of reality in the shadows beyond the Styx. The Valhalla of the early Norseman was a world of war and feasting with the Maidens of Valhalla in constant attendance. The devout Mohammedan was given the promise of an afterlife with *houri* and music as a reward for having done the right things on earth. Even the Hindu, for whom Heaven is oblivion, found the promise of becoming merged with the Godhead itself. While he would lose his individuality as such, in recompense he would partake of the Deity itself and thus would find reward. In all cultures, the attainment of life after death was a reward promised for living the good life on earth. Although the culturo-religious beliefs that defined what the "good life" should be varied enormously, the basic issue always has been that if the rules were followed, the ultimate in rewards was given.

Religion, therefore, largely has grown out of man's search for certainty in an uncertain world and is an extension of the striving for self-preservation that is characteristic of all life forms.<sup>1</sup> You will recall that the thesis throughout our discussion has been that the only real hope that man has for the successful solution to life's problems lies in his ability to put his

<sup>1</sup> The recent series on "The World's Great Religions" in *Life* magazine (Feb. 7, 1955, Mar. 7, 1955, Apr. 4, 1955, May 9, 1955 and June 13, 1955) will give you very readable information about the various directions this search has taken.



knowledge to work. Let us see how aptly we can apply this principle to that most tenuous problem of all, man's search for God.

As with the life problems of sex, marriage, and work, we will find it helpful in this area as well to reduce to a minimal degree, our tendency to emotionalize our way through life. Here, exactly as with the other issues we have faced, we must try to keep our new brain in control. It will be vitally important for us to keep constantly in mind that our success in applying rational tactics to this life problem will be an *inverse* function of the degree of emotion our discussion generates. Remember, that when you begin to feel strongly, you cease to think, and in this area considered thought will be very, very important. Try to reach and maintain an intellectual orientation; stay constantly alert for signs of the disintegration that emotion brings. When we discuss religion, it is more true than in any other area that we must keep continuously in the foremost part of consciousness our injunction: "It is easy to feel; difficult to think!"

### **RELIGION**

Our earlier discussion leads us into the concept that religion is a natural process that grows out of man's search for security. In this respect, it becomes closely allied with other products of this search: education, marriage, vocation, and all the cultural institutions that have been devised to make life more effective and durable for man. If we can accept this description of the function of religion in life, we are in a position to discuss religion at a reasonably realistic level, and if we discuss it at all, it is imperative that we operate precisely on this level. Religion, as a social institution, needlessly has suffered because its concepts largely have been developed in revelation and handed down as dogma. Our attitude is that the validity of fact by revelation is questionable, and that the value of knowledge by fiat is uncertain. Man, upon occasion, may like to be *told*, but ultimately he will want to *know*.

We can understand this when we recall that the child ordi-

narily will rebel against an authoritarian regime in the home. Similarly, the adult, who carries residues of these frustrations about, will experience resentment when patterns of behavior are dictated to him. As an adult organism with reasonable autonomy in other life areas, he often may emancipate himself from religion just as he does from a dictatorial parent. In fact, the frequency, with which modern children are found to hate and fear their parents, may make the whole concept of the "fatherhood" of God suspect in the minds of many an adult.

Over the centuries, we have insisted again and again that the child should love its parents. Because we have *said* so, we rather complacently have assumed that these devotional relations automatically were established. That such is not the case, you can discover by asking any person whose job it is to work through, with children, some of their innermost feelings. Go to any child guidance clinic and ask your questions, but be prepared not to let the answers you get shock you. If the affectional bonds between children and fathers may be of questionable positiveness, how effective is the attempt to develop positive attitudes toward religion by representing God as a Being similar in nature to the father in the family?

When, and only when, the interpersonal relations within the family are themselves affectionate and warm can there be any values to the identification of God and fatherhood. Unfortunately, we know that much too often such affectional bonds simply are not developed within the home. Here again, we see the absolute necessity for continuity in training if man is to develop the kinds of behaviors we say we want him to. In the home, the child must be prepared so that within his own home, he can build the kind of affectional atmosphere that will be necessary if *his* children are to make an easy adjustment to the concept of the fatherhood of God. This preparation must go back through at least two generations if it is to be effective. This is no easy thing, and certainly cannot be attained by exhortation.

This, of course, is but one example. Nevertheless, it illustrates the need to consider religion just as we have con-

sidered the other problems of life. As in these other areas, we must start afresh; we must trim off dead wood cleanly and fearlessly. We shall proceed here as we have before. Our criterion again will be: "That which makes for growth is good; that which retards or distorts growth is bad." The good we shall try to maintain; the bad we shall discard.

When we examine religion as it exists within the framework of our culture, we immediately discover that much of it indeed is good. We also discover that the worth-whileness of a goal is not necessarily reflected in the goodness of the methods used to reach it. In human relations, ends never justify means. If, then, we agree that a goal is worthy, we should exercise considerable care in our selection of ways to attain it. We well may agree that religion is devotion to what man holds to be of supreme value. However, we also would have to agree that most of his past efforts to achieve this goal have been characterized by more wishfulness than skill. In these efforts, his behavior often has approached sheer stupidity. If religion is to be an essential expression of man's search for security, then let us be intelligent about it. Let us determine calmly and dispassionately the means by which this security most readily may be attained.

Any comparative examination will disclose that there is a tremendous amount of similarity between the teachings of Jesus and the principles of good adjustment. In the Sermon on the Mount, the chief emphasis in these rules for human behavior is one upon the need to consider the rights of the other fellow. Our living, we are told, must be done in terms of the needs of others if our lives are to be full. Throughout His instructions to us, Jesus urges us to forget our selfness; He tells us that the best life is a "you-oriented" one. Apparently, we are to *accept* man as he is and to look within ourselves for the bases of our antagonism toward the other person. If we disprove of the behavior of others, we are to show him *through the example of our own life* that there is a better way. Clearly and honestly, we are warned against the practice of using our own personal attitudes and our own personal beliefs as standards for the behavior of others. The plea for intellectual and emo-

tional *honesty* in our judgments of our fellow man is strong and effective. We are asked to face ourselves squarely, to recognize and accept ourselves for what we are, and to take man as we find him.

### RELIGION AND PSYCHOLOGY

These are indeed the principles of hygienic living. They are principles that apply whether we view life from religious or psychological frames of reference. We have seen that implicit and explicit within well-adjusted behavior there lies the need for a total and tolerant recognition of the other person if our lives are to be adequate and happy. Recall the principles of good adjustment that we already have described. Their entire direction is you-oriented, they are in direct opposition to selfness, and all life movement has an *outward* thrust. Certainly, there is no antagonism here; good adjustment makes for efficient growth in or out of the church and therefore toward more adequate and more effective living. Within our culture, the psychologically effective and the Christian life go hand in hand.

The extension of these principles is infinite within our way of life. After a lot of human backing and filling, industry is beginning to recognize the individual as a person. The current emphasis upon and enthusiasm for supervisory and management development is a direct reflection of the recognition that when the consideration of the other person is given its proper weight in the interpersonal equation, *people* live together more effectively on the job. In a new film, "The Hands of a Corporation," produced by one of our "best managed" manufacturing organizations, the president has this to say: "But research and facilities do not do the job alone. The most important ingredient is people, and that's why we try to have a sound program of human relations. Volumes have been written on human relations, but *we think it boils down to the simple application of the Golden Rule.*—" (Italics mine.) Could there be a more clear-cut statement? Remember, this comes from the world of practical, profit-minded industry. Would industry be

interested in the Golden Rule if it didn't "work?" We need no more evidence for our point; the principles of good adjustment are those of the Christian life and these principles *work* for man wherever he may be.

Perhaps it is characteristic of man that he should expend so much of his energies in trying to show differences when a demonstration of similarities would be more helpful. In any case, the religionist often has accused the scientist of "living in sin," while the scientist as commonly has scoffed at the religionist for "living in error." In this, both proponents of the conflict remind us of the fable of the six blind men and the elephant. Both of them view life from too narrow an outlook. Each of them has been so busy trying to prove that he alone is right that there has been no energy left over to work on *inter-*relationships.

### **INTERRELATIONSHIPS**

At present, we are moving strongly in the direction of interrelation as contrasted with the trend toward separation of a few decades back. Religion and science are working together. Religion and psychology *are* attempting to describe and to understand human nature. This is but the application of man's intelligence to a mutual problem. The two, working together, can make greater strides than either one can achieve separately. However, a considerable degree of suspicion also mutually exists. A lot of historical fences will have to be mended before the joint effort can become a whole-hearted one.

Yet, this is not impossible and an approach can be made from strictly scientific ground. The honest scientist, who asks honest questions of himself, encounters queries his science cannot answer. How, from protoplasm to man, is order brought out of randomness? How does spirit arise out of matter? How does a *person* grow out of impersonal stuff? What *is* the Principle of Organization that must be involved?<sup>2</sup> Questions like these demand a team approach. No one unaided

<sup>2</sup> E. Sinnot, *The Biology of the Spirit*, New York, Viking, 1955.

group can find a really satisfactory answer. But, working together, at least there would be a chance.

In order to obtain this kind of coöperative attack, there are some things we must do first. Again, we have to begin with the question of attitudes and their role in behavior. For reasons never clearly stated, religion traditionally has insisted that the infallibility of its concepts was universal and absolute. Even partially objective examination of these concepts indicates that their *interpretation*, at least, has been the result of the activity of human minds. Most of them have come from the thinking of theological philosophers whose very thoughts were bound by the prescribed limits of a logical system. However, those who are familiar with the development and the operation of human mentality have serious difficulty in accepting the conclusions of "pure reason." Altogether too much is known of the interrelation between what man *wants* to discover and to what ends his thinking may lead him. As long as logic alone supplies the rules of the game, reasoning becomes a predictable result of the value judgments maintained by the reasoner. On these grounds, it becomes relatively easy to "prove" that matter does or does not exist, that there is or is not a God, that man is or is not a rational being. This kind of cerebration may be intellectually stimulating and it may be a lot of verbal fun, but all it achieves is to further confuse an already difficult issue. So, rather than to submerge ourselves in what may turn out to be an impenetrable swamp of philosophico-theological ponderings, let us attempt to see what religion has to offer man *as he lives* out his life span.

As we move into this task, let us look into some of the attitudes that lie behind the kind of behaviors that make co-operation difficult. We can say immediately that we must recognize and accept the fact that both religion and psychology will have to give a little from their typically stubborn defense of their own traditional assumptions. Religion will be asked to question its insistence upon the eternal validity of some of its historically determined concepts. Psychology will have to show a willingness to admit the reality of the human need a functional religion may meet. Each of these areas has a

great deal to offer to the other, but neither can be successful on an all or nothing basis. Any working agreement established between two opposed points of view demands some giving by both; some kind of compromise always is effected whenever varying ideas are brought into a common program. You must recognize that an insistence upon the complete and unchanging acceptance of any interpretation of human behavior is only a thinly veiled version of the child's cry: "Do it *my* way!"

Any system of human affairs that cannot withstand a searching scrutiny by probing minds must be rather shakily based. You see, whenever we humans find ourselves struggling to defend a fundamentally weak point of view, we become afraid and angry. You know thoroughly well that when you begin to have difficulty in marshaling effective answers to a questioning attack upon a pet opinion, you also begin to become angry with your questioner. This is a typically human reaction and becomes yet more acute and immediate if your own life adjustment is none too well established. It follows that just as the poorly adjusted person, touched upon a psychic sore spot, hastily begins to assemble his defenses, so too does a basically inadequate system of human relations react to what it considers as rejection. In the individual or in the institution, fundamental insecurity breeds sensitivity to threat. An immediate and emotional reaction to any suggestion of imperfection is first-rate evidence of the existence of basic insecurity feelings. This is true of people as individuals or of people in a group. The highly emotional reaction against desegregation laws in the South illustrates our point. In human behavior, there is a basic principle: that which is secure, withstands; that which is insecure, withdraws.

### **TRADITIONAL RELIGION**

Religion always has fulminated against change. Within most folk's life span, organized religion has seen the devil variously disguised as Physics, Biology, Psychology, and Sociology. As each of these scientific fields began to come up with ideas that religion felt to be threatening to itself, religion has re-

acted violently. Instead of looking for ways in which scientific fact might be incorporated, religion's practice has been to reject and deny. Of course, it becomes impossible forever to deny verifiable fact. Consequently, religion has paid a price for its reactionary behavior in a measure of skepticism and ineffectiveness in the lives of men in general. The tragedy is that religion is still doing it. Traditional religion already has cried: "Atheist!" at some of those who have translated and tried to interpret the recently found Dead Sea Scrolls.<sup>3</sup>

It has been characteristic of religion to refuse to move with the changes in human knowledge that time and experience have wrought. This stubbornness is an important reason why it has lost vitality in the lives of people. In altogether too many cases, religion continues to insist upon concepts and practices that were evolved centuries ago when man in general was an ignorant and superstitious fellow compared with his accumulated knowledge of today. When archaic practices fail to be effective in modern man, religion has only its own intransigence to blame.

It looks as though a great deal of religion's refusal to go along with scientific fact results from the efforts of human beings to interpret the teachings of Jesus. Since these interpretations have a distinctly human source, any other human being has a right to ask: "How do you know?"; "What is the source of your knowledge?" To the usual answer that these interpretations were "revealed," the human mind has a right to be skeptical. We know far too much about how wish and desire may be answered in dreams or in hallucinatory experiences to be very impressed with their occurrence. Because at the time when such phenomena occurred, man had no understanding of their basic causes, does not justify the imputing of suprahuman causation. It scarcely speaks for the rationality of man that he should accept concepts evolved in times when ghosts, dragons, and witches were as real to people as were cats, dogs, or horses. We find only amusement in the adver-

<sup>3</sup> Dead Sea Scrolls stir growing controversy, *New York Times*, Sunday, February, 12, 1956. (It is ironic that final translation of one of these disclosed directions for a "treasure hunt.")



tising techniques of the eighteenth century, but we still try to sell religion with tactics developed in the fourth and fifth. Agrippa (one of our early physicians) had to flee the Inquisition for suggesting that there were more effective ways to treat the insane than to flog them.

Unfortunately, there is more truth than fiction in this as you may discover for yourself. Read current translations of the writings of St. Augustine done around 400 A.D., and then read what one of our staunch neo-orthodoxists, Reinhold Niebuhr, has to say. You will find the same old fourth century concepts all dressed up in a brand-new gown. It is the same body but with a "new look." With both St. Augustine and Niebuhr, man is condemned as an inherently weak and wicked vessel that is doomed to destruction unless he supplicates "grace." Original sin is held to be as intrinsic in man as is intelligence, and man is damned before he begins. We can understand St. Augustine, perhaps. In his youth, he is reputed to have been quite a boy and well could have written later out of sheer remorse for his own earlier behavior. Furthermore, he was writing at a time when very little was known about man and when myth, superstition, and knowledge were granted equal status. We wonder, however, what Niebuhr's excuse may be. It is hard to understand how a highly intelligent man, writing on human nature today, conscientiously can insist upon a concept of mankind so decidedly out of line with what is *known*. The demonstrable facts of the genesis and expression of human behavior that psychology has presented are just simply opposed to the so-called inborn characteristics of man that seem so dear to the heart of the traditional religionist. It looks as though psychology tries to understand man while religion merely suspects him.<sup>4</sup> Steig describes this latter attitude in his immortal cartoon.

But this is not the worst. From what we know about motivating factors in the guidance of human behavior, it is sheer

<sup>4</sup> Chronic suspicion, however, is not general among professional religionists. You may find healthy antidote in: H. Wieman, and others, *Religious Liberals Reply*, Boston, Beacon, 1947, and also A. Boisen, *Religion in Crisis and Custom*, New York, Harper & Brothers, 1955.



FIGURE 21. From *The Lonely Ones* by William Steig, by permission of Duell, Sloan & Pearce, Inc. Copyright, 1942, by William Steig.

defeatism to assure man of failure before he begins his task. How effective would you expect any training program to be if it were begun with the statement: "Of course, you'll never make it; you're just too dumb. However, if you do exactly as I say, if you leave all decisions to my judgment, and if your obedience is unquestioning, I will be willing to help you in this probably hopeless task." This is the blind leading the blind with a vengeance.

Now, psychology regards man as infinitely potential. We just do not know what the limits of man's ability to accomplish may be, except that we continuously are being astounded by what he can do. During the last war, material ordinarily taking a year to learn was mastered in an "impossible" eight weeks. The four-minute mile and the sixty-foot shot-put are already in the record books. When we look honestly and openly, we find man to be free, plastic, and docile. His abilities and characteristics vary in degree, sure enough, but they do not appear to be bound by inherently directed patterns of behavior. Man does become what he is trained to be, but there is just no evidence to indicate that he was *born that way*. In a very

real sense, man is free to choose his behavior, but we also know that his "choice" usually is a direct function of his early experiences. As a consequence of this knowledge, it would seem only good sense to define those life experiences that make for the "good" life and then to try to get these experiences into the developmental history of our people. Surely, this would be a more positive approach than the usual practice of complaining about man's supposedly inherently sinful pretentiousness. It seems ironic that the religious traditionalist should accept as the epitome of rationality the rationalizations of an ancient, although converted, sensualist. What is worse, these system-bound personalities try verbally to demonstrate that the results of a remorse-driven frustration are actual facts. Burns had a word to say about these folk:

But och, I backward cast my e'e  
On prospects drear;  
And forward, though I canna see  
I guess, and fear.

We already have seen how our fearful seers predicted ruin for the home as soon as social progress had begun to affect its functions. We find an identical reaction in those anxiety-bound personalities who see religious nihilism in scientific advancement. For these as well, change is chaos and when they are faced with it, they fret greatly for their mother-surrogate; tradition. As a consequence, they are quite likely to regard psychology, psychiatry, and all mind-healing psychotherapy as unauthorized invasions of their own prerogatives. If, however, religion has lost ground in this area, it might prove interesting to find out why the loss was incurred.

### **PSYCHOTHERAPY AND THE CHURCH**

Over the years, mental healing increasingly has become the task of secular technology. This shift came about largely because religion insisted that the basic needs of man must be those that religion held to exist. Man was told that because he inherently was weak and sinful, he could find solace only

within the church. In medieval times, this may have sufficed. At least, any comfort the church could bring to the mind in torment was considerably more desirable than the streets or the madhouse. Unfortunately for the church, times and technologies change. Traditional religion refused to adjust itself to technological advance; it steadfastly maintained its original convictions. Its attempts, therefore, continuously to meet the needs of the emotionally disturbed with procedures developed in much earlier times, met with increasing failure. As our culture became more complex and more demanding, man's problems in ready adjustment became more severe. As man's difficulties increased, he had more and more need for assistance in living. Technology offered growing solutions to meet growing demands, traditional religion did not.

Although it may well be true that a factor in the increasing insecurity that man seems to feel is his loss of a functional religion, it is not difficult to show that this loss arose out of religious intransigence and not out of an inherent wickedness in man. Religion simply failed the practical test of usefulness to man. As a striving and needful organism, man is most unlikely to be content with futility, however holy, if he can find success, however secular. As a consequence, psychology and psychiatry were, in a very real sense, *forced* to take over in a life area where religion had failed.

The reasons for this failure have been described. The sciences of human behavior took over in the realm of psychotherapy because:

1. Religion insisted upon approaching all human problems in terms of ultimates. All mankind was treated in precisely the same way as though all had slightly variant aspects of the same problem. This procedure went the way of all panaceas, and medicine, interested in the individual and willing to work in terms of his uniqueness, was a natural gainer. However essential it may be to orient man toward the ultimate, it remains more essential to meet him and his problems in terms of the present.
2. Most religious issues are also moral issues. The individual, suffering and in anguish because of unfortunate life habits, was more likely than not to be given a moral lecture when he took his

problem to the minister. Approaching the psychotherapist, however, he was treated only as a sick human being without the unnecessary and futile exhortations against perversion and sin. The psychotherapist sought to understand him; the minister to convince him of his "guilt."

3. Religion has remained fixed in its absolutes. Steadfastly, it has fought against progress in medicine, psychology, and life. It has opposed anesthesia, vaccination, educative processes in venereal disease, and sex education. Inconsistently, it has damned man as a sinner and yet insisted upon maintaining the ignorance that led him to become one. All of this has rendered religion suspect in the thinking of mankind. Man has come to expect that from the pulpit he will hear only a condemnation of things current and a plea for the return to the "faith of our fathers."<sup>5</sup>

Human motivation is a diverse thing. Many times, as the clinician quickly discovers, basic motivation is concealed from the person himself. Particularly when our feelings are deeply involved, we humans may behave for reasons quite unknown to ourselves. In light of these facts, one wonders about the deep motivations of the neoorthodoxists. These men promote an ultraconservative theology while at the same time propounding a highly radical sociology. It is conceivable that, perhaps unconsciously, they contemplate a time when, within a general social chaos, only the church stands unchanged. Knowing what man's behavior historically has been in times of stress, they could expect him to rush for the security and sanctuary the church would seem to offer. Religion would seem to arise over confusion, and the social dominance of the medieval church thereby would be reestablished. This is conceivable, of course, yet we hesitate to attribute such motivation to Men of God. However, Men of God are still *human beings* and as such, are subject to the same behavior patterns as you and I.

It is a characteristic of life, in person or in institution, that failure to meet an assigned task will be met by a more effective individual or agency taking over. In the area of psychotherapy, this has happened to the church. It failed to keep

<sup>5</sup> C. Landis, Psychotherapy and religion, *J. Pastoral Care*, 1947, 1: 17-27.

abreast with growth in the knowledge of behavior disorders. Therefore it could not effectively meet an expanding human demand, and man looked elsewhere for assistance. Whenever an individual or an organization loses contact with *reality*, life passes by and leaves only bewilderment, fear, and resentment in its wake. Within the realities of the need for psychotherapy, the church failed to meet a social expectation. It refused to change with the times and so time passed it by. A basic principle of mental hygiene is applicable: Whenever we humans cannot change a situation that we have to face and we are disturbed by this, we must change our own attitudes toward it if we hope for success. The problem is clear: "When you cannot change the thing, you must change yourself."

Belatedly, the church is trying to do just this. Having waged a fruitless war, it now is making efforts to join an "enemy" it could not defeat. This effort to adapt itself to changing social demands is no more than ten years old, but the effort to bring religion into alignment with the human needs of today is a strong and continuing one. As one might expect, however, typically human characteristics are appearing. In our efforts to change ourselves, we humans, unless we are being competently guided, go overboard in our attempt. Finding ourselves in one ditch, we scramble madly *over* the road and plop ourselves into another. As a consequence of this human tendency, religion is in some danger at the moment of *commercializing* itself. In many instances it has borrowed, effectively enough but with questionable wisdom, directly from the tactics of advertising. Periodicals, radio, and television teem with various appeals, justifications, and threats designed to bring religion into our everyday lives. In many cities you can "Dial-a-Prayer" on your telephone. You dial a certain number and for a few following moments you can listen to a message of encouragement and hope. In Cleveland, Ohio, after six months of operation, calls still come in at the rate of over 3000 a day.

One can only comment that once religion moved out of its complacency, little grass has had opportunity to grow under its feet. Of course, time will tell us of whatever real effective-

ness may be achieved, but it's all just a little frightening. How centuries of immovable tradition may *overnight* convert itself into the pace of modern living raises interesting questions. Certainly, any psychotherapist would hold sudden changes in behavior to be highly suspect regardless of the desirability of their direction.

However, we humans have difficulty in doing things the solid way. We want results and, consequently, commonly confuse speed with effectiveness. We seem to feel that if we can do a thing quicker, we also have done it better. Of course, sudden change is newsworthy while slow growth is not. We were well on our way to a reasonable sobriety through a slow process of education when we tried to do the job all at once with the Volstead Act. The results of this fiasco are fresh enough in our memories to need no further description.

About ten years ago, the church began to show signs of desiring to align itself with the times in which it was living. It began to open its eyes, to make realistic examinations of itself, and its thoughtful men were asking questions. It began an effort to educate itself and mankind toward a more functional union. Joshua Liebmann wrote his forceful description of what religion could do when conditions were right.<sup>6</sup> The *Journal of Pastoral Care* published its first volume in 1947 and is a journal dedicated to the mutual effectiveness of psychology and religion. Coöperative efforts between cleric and psychiatrist sprang up everywhere from seminary to clinic. We began real well but our enthusiasm rapidly outran our judgment. Tremendous impetus to this "new religion" (that seems to be a kind of "How to Do It" training course) has been given by Bishop Fulton J. Sheen and Dr. Norman Vincent Peale. They present "ways to do it" that are as neatly packaged as any commercial house could ask for. Reassurance is sold to the American public and sold very well indeed. Maybe this is the answer, but what do we really want; to sell religion or to teach it? Certainly, the effective teacher must be a successful sales-

<sup>6</sup> J. Liebmann, *Peace of Mind*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1946. Looking over similar works that have flooded the market ever since, we can say that the good Rabbi *really* started something!

man, but he is first of all a *teacher* and he does not mistake skillful salesmanship for the more permanent results of sound education.

Nevertheless, enthusiastic salesmanship or not, the results of this should be good—unless, of course, in our efforts to reach a middle ground, we jump clear back into the old ditch again. Regardless of the test of time, the current resurgence of religion has helped the church to understand the *facts* of man's nature, how psychology may work with religion in contributing to general mental health, and how the inner conflicts of mankind effectively may be resolved. Clerics of all denominations are being made aware of the role that counseling can play in their work and are shifting from moral judgments to more factual ones in their estimation of man. Furthermore, it has become quite impossible to be indifferent to the church; as an institution, it appears everywhere in man's life. Because of this, even the 64,000,000 people in the United States who belong to no church at all are going to be reached whether they want this or not. Help inevitably is going to come to many of us, and there is a chance that this help may come before we are so deep along the road to neurosis that it is too late. The reassurance that we are offered, however blatantly, helps us to maintain an optimistic attitude and if nothing else is achieved, this is contribution enough.

### PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION

Further on the credit side, this whole movement is bringing psychology and religion together as teammates in a common effort. This, we cheer. We already have seen that the insecurities, anxieties, fears, and behavior disorders of the adult are functions of what happened to him as a child. The causes of human breakdown, in both the normal and abnormal range, are well enough understood so that we can make a direct comparison between the psychological and a theological description of human nature. When we make this, we see at once that the psychologically normal and the religiously good adult is one who is *free* and hence able to *love* without the



impeding apprehensiveness of anxiety. Either person is able to see himself in his relation to others, and he does not feel any compelling need to assert his individuality. Both are capable of suspended judgment and of postponing pleasant pleasures for future happiness. Furthermore, their behavior is carried out in the absence of any serious renouncing, denying, or avoiding mechanisms of personal defense. From our comparison, there emerges an *identity* between the concepts of normal adjustment and those of the Christian. Beyond the fear of the unfamiliar, there just is no reason why the religionist should not make use of the knowledge of man that psychology can bring into the picture.

We can go somewhat farther and show that, at a fundamental level, there is a strikingly close resemblance between the Christian doctrine of sin and the psychological concept of emotional immaturity. Remember? When the child meets with frustration, he reacts with withdrawal, attack, or helplessness, depending upon the behavior that has paid off in the past. Recall, also, that these behavior patterns were shown to be protective devices through which the person tries to meet the threat he may perceive about him. These trends also were shown to be basic to neurotic behavior and therefore to underlie general inefficiency in daily living. Christian theology sees the roots of sin in a basic egocentricity and ego-protectiveness. This subservience to ego needs is characterized by an absence of faith. If this means that such a person has "faith" only in himself, that he fears and suspects others, and sees all aspects of life as fundamentally threatful, immediate relationships between a lack of faith and maladjustment become apparent. Theology tells us that when man is of little faith, he behaves with an aggressive pridefulness or he retreats in slothful fear.

These terms well may describe what we have called the search for antipathy and the search for apathy. Pride and fear well may be just as essential to the Christian concept of sin as they are to the psychological concept of maladjustment. It is quite possible that both areas are talking about the same processes and that confusion has arisen because each has called

them by different names. At least, there is some hope in such an identity; sin and maladjustment both become *learned* behaviors and therefore are open to correction. So long as either is held to be a natural by-product of the fact of being born, the outlook is gloomy indeed. Furthermore, through a concept of sin as a life development, religion can offer an expectancy of help that makes sense to thinking man instead of trying to do *all* of his thinking for him. In any case, if religion means what it is now making such loud noises about, it should examine its basic assumptions in an effort to determine what differences actually are *real* and what ones are only *semantic*.

We have been told that the foremost concern of ethical religion is "personality" or the "Spiritual man."<sup>7</sup> If this is true, then the behavior of both sinful and maladjusted man arise out of common factors. In both behavior patterns, we can unearth defensive reactions of the personality too fearful of its limitations or too proud to admit them. In either case, there may appear an overassertiveness or a panicky retreat whenever threat is encountered. Both personalities are too weak to stand alone and to face life freely; both are forced to search for artificial support within some mechanism of defense. Man, whether called "sinful" or "maladjusted," *may* be expressing identical forms of behavior. At least, the only barrier to adequate examination of this possibility lies in traditionally based presuppositions.

A common and readily justified meeting ground between psychology and religion is found in the treatment of the unhealthy personality—or, if you prefer, the sick soul. Basic to successful psychotherapy is the establishment of *rapport*. This means that before any therapist may hope for success, he must obtain the confidence and the trust of the patient. As a consequence, the more permissive and accepting the atmosphere, the easier it becomes to establish this confidence. Parenthetically, the new "tranquilizing" drugs (as sodium pentathol and scopolomine before them) permit this development of confidence by reducing the patient's worry and concern for

<sup>7</sup> J. Lathrop, Cultural bridges in religion, in L. Bryson, L. Finkelstein, and R. Maciver (eds.), *Approaches to Group Understanding*, New York, Harper, 1947.

himself and thereby permitting the therapist to "get to" him more readily. The drugs themselves have no curative values.

Whatever the case, whether the opening be made pharmaceutically or religiously, the end-result resides in the fact that the sick person is now able to recognize and to feel that he is accepted and understood *as a person*. He comes to regard the therapist as one who has respect for him, wants to help him, and through whom his difficulties can be reduced. This is a "sharing of the burden" in one of its finest expressions. The sick person feels that there will be a joint attack upon his problems, that he no longer must face them alone, and that there is now a communality of purpose. Therefore, he no longer believes himself to be alone and defenseless. He now has an ally, a competent and powerful ally, and he gains the conviction that *he* can be helped. Out of this initial *faith* grows the belief that he can meet life with his own resources as the therapy continues. The therapist, however, *does not* obtain this respect and confidence through lecturing or moralizing about the patient's problem. Rather, the therapist *accepts the patient as a sick person whose life habits have gotten out of line and for whom there is every hope for readjustment*.

In order to obtain relief from his troubling symptoms, the patient must be led back through the maze of his established habit patterns until the situations that caused the maldevelopment have been discovered. In a sense, the patient is led into reliving these situations and, thereby, to perceive them from the reference point of a more mature perspective. Once he realizes "how he got this way," he is in a position to begin to replace the old habits with more effective ones.

This process of going back through one's life history can be most distressful and quite painful at times. Consequently, a high degree of skill is demanded that these pain-producing experiences should not be uncovered too quickly or before the patient is "ready" for them. The patient becomes ready as his ability to tolerate and his insight strengthen. In essence, the person must undergo a measure of pain and struggle before he can find genuine relief. In a sense, his "new" personality arises out of suffering and out of an emerging strength to deal

with it. Maturity, therefore, resides in the fundamental ability to endure stress and to cope effectively with the suffering and anxiety that may arise out of frustration.

An important aspect of maturity, as we view it in our culture, is a faith in man and a feeling of belongingness with him. Now religion long has insisted that the development of just these attitudes was one of its contributions to mankind. The parallel, therefore, between the development of psychological maturity and the emergence of the Christian way of life is now highlighted and clearly seen. The well-adjusted person is one who possesses the kind of security feelings that are requisite to a successful life application of the Christian doctrine of the cross. (It needs very little open-mindedness to observe that the same relationship exists between psychology and other major religious convictions as well. We emphasize the *Christian* doctrine just as we have emphasized *our* social culture. For our purposes of description, we make no distinction between Christianity and Judaism.) Efficient adjustment, whether we consider it psychologically or in terms of Christian ethics, appears in major form as an effective *living of life*. When you can witness this effectiveness in actual operation as life problems are faced and resolved, you need no greater testimony to its value.

### **FAITH IN MAN**

It demands but very little thought to arrive at the conclusion that just as a well-trained therapist may assist us toward good adjustment, so too may the broadly trained cleric assist us toward functional faith in God. In both procedures, we have to develop personal integrity coupled with faith in man and in life. Confidence in ourselves and the development of inner strength can emerge from successful psychotherapy. So too, may confidence and trust grow out of an effective relationship between cleric and layman within the redemptive fellowship of the church. Through both procedures, we can grow in our ability to tolerate frustration and in our capacity to endure. *When* religion and psychology make a joint attack,

we might very well expect that greater success would be attained than through the single efforts of either. This certainly appears to be the case. The growing success of the American Foundation of Religion and Psychiatry begun some years back by Norman Vincent Peale, D.D., and Smiley Blanton, M.D., has shown us what religion and psychiatry can do together. If demand is any indicator of success, we just cannot question the value of this clinic. It "outgrows its britches" with fantastic rapidity. Of course, we have yet to see how much is fad and how much reality. However, the *potential* undoubtedly is present.<sup>8</sup>

Growth in personal integrity, whether it develops through personal or suprapersonal relations, serves to free us from the compulsiveness of egocentric living. As this freedom emerges, we become more readily able to accept the consequences of our behavior and to look for more varied ways of coping with our problems. We become more plastic and less rigid; we no longer are bound, we are free. We now are able to make the kind of choices that permits us to behave as members in good standing within our group. This increased personal freedom also permits us the freedom of choice theology has insisted man possessed. Regarded this way, only the psychologically efficient personality is really *free*. In both psychology and religion, the key to personal integrity and the "good life" is found in a factor central to both—the willingness to consider the rights of others in our own human equation or, put another way, the ability to love our neighbors.

The concept that freedom can be attained only through efficient adjustment carries important implications for religion. If the "good" life is a function of the adequacy of our personal adjustment, it becomes apparent immediately that much of what has passed as "religion" has been only a manifestation of a neurotically driven search for security. Before it may come of modern age, religion must accept the fact that just as there are differences between individuals, there are differences between the reasons why men search for God. If

<sup>8</sup> Recently the National Academy of Religion and Mental Health was formed in New York City, *Time*, April 9, 1956, p. 77.

this search is impelled by sheer anxiety strivings in the absence of any real insight, the resulting behavior has no more intrinsic worth than any other escape mechanism such an emotionally tormented person might develop. Each of the varied behavior patterns we humans may display certainly is not equally desirable. By the same token, all religious belief is not equally desirably based. Religion must recognize and accept the fact that much too commonly it provides a superficial sanctuary for the emotionally immature. Religion must also accept the fact that if it is to be functionally effective in our lives, we must come to it freely and insightfully. When we come out of sheer compulsiveness, we are fooling both ourselves and the church. Then, the church will have little *real* meaning for us.

### STRESS AND RELIGION

Traditionally, religion has stumbled badly in its refusal to recognize such possibilities as these. It has pointed in some pride to the fact that man has sought religion repeatedly during times of stress. However, it has closed its eyes to the equally important fact that, once the stressful situation had passed, man's need for religion passed with it. That religion has felt this "place of sanctuary" to be important in its existence is indicated by the glee with which the statement—"There are no atheists in foxholes"—was welcomed by religionists during the last war. The question of the duration of this religiously oriented attitude seems not to have been of concern. We well may ask, therefore: "Is there any evidence that this stress-induced orientation to religion has maintained itself?" We can find some answer to this question in a study that showed the veteran to feel less religious need than the nonveteran on the college campus.<sup>9</sup> Religion should clearly recognize that, over the centuries, man has *used* it, with or without conscious intent, whenever he has felt seriously threatened. The current resur-

<sup>9</sup> G. Allport, J. Gillispie, and J. Young, The religion of the postwar college student, *J. Psychol.*, 1948, 25: 3-35.

gence in the religious behavior of man quite readily may stem from the economic and vital threat man sees in the possibility of atomic war. The suspicion is very strong that an objective study readily would reveal that over the ages, peaks in religious activity and in human crises have gone hand in hand. The recognition of this factor, combined with the human knowledge psychology could bring, might reveal ways in which the church could come to be a *constant* force in our lives instead of but an occasional one.

That we seek religion primarily when we are threatened is indicated by the much disputed relationship between religion and civilization. Scholars of history diverge at this point. Some of them, like Gibbon, have seen religion as a menace to culture. They believe that religion plays a major role in the downfall of a civilization because as civilizations fall, there appears a resurgence in religion within that civilization. Other scholars, such as Toynbee, suggest the explanation that civilizations are but stepping stones by which religion mounts in ever-increasing progress. From where we sit, however, there is a third alternative that can help us to understand why, as civilizations weaken and die, religion seems to flourish. We assume that man, as an emotional creature, adapts with reasonable facility so long as he feels competent to cope with life. When, however, he senses threat beyond his ability to meet it, he seeks some kind of protection. In terms of these behaviors, we would predict that human beings would surge toward the church whenever they feel under undue stress. Religion's resurgence therefore *should* develop whenever man finds life in general to be too much for him. Just as the child, frightened by what it cannot understand, runs crying to its mother, so too with man. When we humans are faced with forces too intense for us to meet, we search for mother-surrogates. One such, we find in the church.

Religion can take little credit for this. In terms of this description, religion becomes a protective-escape device that man *utilizes* as his life takes on a growing and frightening unpredictableness. In light of this explanation, the current

resurgence makes a lot of sense.<sup>10</sup> All this is yet more reason why religion, as psychology, should be principally interested in, and should emphasize, the well-adjusted and adequate personality.

When religious feeling or behavior grows out of a compulsiveness dictated by fear, this behavior should be recognized for what it actually is. Viewed objectively, it becomes a symptom of a self-centered search for a reestablishment of the security the child may find in the arms of its mother. In all probability, much of what passes for, and unfortunately may be accepted as, religious faith is not much more than a wishful search for a parent-surrogate. It would seem infinitely more desirable for us to respond to God as an ideal fulfillment of human capacity; that we should respond freely and without an undercurrent of fear. If we are to make free responses, however, we must be able to meet life squarely. We must have discovered through the strength-giving crucibles of experience that growth *and* freedom come only through a personal victory over frustration. If we wish to grow toward this emancipation from fear, we must apply the knowledge we have about the ways through which free and adequate personalities best are developed. From our study of the environment from which such personalities have the best chance of emerging, we know that the most *inefficient* of all surroundings are those whose foundations are laid upon authoritarianism and fear. Unfortunately, these are the very practices religion traditionally has used. By now, one would think that their failure should be evident to the most rigid of traditionalists and man should not be censured for asking: "What has religion done for me?"

In a sense, the church is putting itself to a test right now. In its growing union with psychology, it is advocating the desirability of rearing us humans to be effective and adequate persons. Religion and mental hygiene are joining hands in the expectation that their mutual endeavor may bring increased effectiveness into our lives. This is a most reasonable expectation. The rewards are promising, but there is no venture with-

<sup>10</sup> The Search, *Time*, November 21, 1955, pp. 60-62; When Men Find God, *Coronet*, April, 1956, pp. 45-49.



out risk. If this combined effort is effective in enabling us to meet life more readily and efficiently we certainly will have gained. If, after our general adjustment has become more adequate, we still feel a need for religious faith, then the church will have taken a tremendous step ahead. If we do not feel this need, then the church will be faced with a problem indeed. From one point of view, after centuries of authoritarianism, the church now is trying a social experiment. For this courage, born of desperation as it may have been, let us give all credit. The prior assumption would be that this experiment is going to work out most happily for all concerned.

### **FEAR AND THE CHURCH**

For the gains that permissiveness and acceptance have to offer, the church will have to pay a price. It will have to forego its traditionally favored control procedures of threat and fear for more humane techniques. It should do this in any event. The use of damnation with its eternal hellfire well may have been effective in a time when man in general was accustomed to a slavish obedience to the lord of the manor. To the illiterate, superstitious, and credulous man of the Middle Ages for whom heaven was "up" and hell was "down," the threat of burning forever probably was real and potent. Think for a moment. You have been burned and you know the intense pain that develops. Now imagine, if you will, pain like this spread over your entire body and continuing without relief for eternity. If then, you *believed* in a literal hell, can you understand how afraid you might be? *And* how this fear might force you to behave?

Fear, if it involves "real" threat to us, can be a highly efficient means of control for most of us. The question is, however, is this the best or even the most desirable method of control man could use? Do we want to frighten ourselves into the good life or should we educate ourselves so that we will *want* to behave as Christian ethics indicate we should? In any case, while the use of hell as a threat in order to control human behavior may have been effective during the Middle Ages, what

is its effect today? At its maximum, it can but add to the guilt feelings and anxieties that too many of us now carry about. In doing this, fear of hellfire becomes an added factor in human *breakdown* rather than an adjunct to effective living.

As a general principle, the use of fear in the control of human behavior serves only to induce repression, to develop false ego-ideals, and to aggravate feelings of guilt. If we know anything of how we arrive at a functional maturity, we know that it is by the paths of self-realization and self-acceptance. Therefore, we should not expect the wholeness of maturity to appear as a result of procedures that make only for disunity. Personal effectiveness is not developed out of repression and the refusal to admit moral failures. It may, however, arise *after* such failure has been recognized, accepted, and understood as a part of the person himself. The psychotherapist knows that his patients can reach this maturity only when they are convinced that he accepts them, failures and all. When the cleric and his religion are willing to accept *man as he is*, with respect for his successes and tolerance for his failures, then both the cleric *and* his religion can become an active agent in man's life. Put another way, we may say that when religion *applies* the teachings of Jesus to everyday life, it may find a sanctuary of its own in the hearts of men.

It is a commentary on religion that its insistence upon blind obedience to its traditional concepts actually has accomplished very little in improving the world. In large measure, this is because man in general and religion in particular have refused to respect that most basic of human rights, the dignity of the person. A central task for both religion and psychology, therefore, is one of leading man to understand himself. Then, and then only, will man be able to understand his fellow men and, in turn, be understood by them. What we call "Christian Brotherhood" becomes possible only when we humans possess enough self-understanding so that we can develop the mutual respect for human integrity this term implies. Much too commonly we mistake paternalism for fraternity.

Any attempt to arrive at this mutual understanding will demand that we rework our common value judgments, that we recognize them as *value judgments*, and cease to identify our

judgments *with* the behavior. We must stop thinking of man in terms of what we believe he "ought" to be and examine him as he actually is. When, in our thinking, we identify what we believe man *should be* with what man *is*, we create only confusion for ourselves and trouble for man. What we should strive for is increased understanding and less recourse to "don't do it." Here again, we run headlong into the old differences between the ease of feeling and the hard work that thinking demands.

As a general thing, both religion and psychology have failed fully to meet their obligations to increase human understanding. Religion with its traditional self-image of an absolutism, in which truth is given once and for all, has but added to man's burden of conflict. Without intent, it has worked toward the disunity of human personality and has failed to meet the test of utility. Religion's worth certainly should be measured by what it *does* for man.

Psychology also has failed. In its traditionalized ego-ideal of a fact-finding science, it actually has worked against an application of these facts to the problems of living. This traditional thrust within psychology, that still has a large following, has proved quite futile for a better understanding of man by himself. This insistence upon the constant accumulation of bits of isolated fact merely indicates a basic lack of imagination. Furthermore, when we humans look for security within the cloistered walls of the scientific laboratory, we are just as fundamentally insecure as he who searches within the narrow limits of pure logic for the revelation of a personal God. The one is every bit as compulsive and every bit as driven as the other. The only difference between them lies in the *direction* of their search. We can very much doubt that anything of functional usefulness in our everyday living can arise out of motives that force men to conceal *themselves* behind the barriers of either scientific fact or wishful myth.

### **COÖPERATIVE EFFORT**

Fortunately for us all, workers in both fields are recognizing the need for coöperative effort. When the religionist and the

psychologist sit down together to work out the contributions that they jointly may make toward the betterment of mankind, the potential of their combined resources may be realized. Furthermore, both fields will be the better for it. Over the past few years, such attempts have increased rapidly. We may expect that when this effort becomes a united assault upon the problems of life, man will benefit tremendously. When this occurs, psychology and religion will have come of age and man will truly be free.

The potential that lurks within this joint effort is worthy of note. If God is the supreme value for man, if He is the complete and total realization of man's capacities and abilities, then He may be found through *growth* in understanding, relationship, and kinship throughout the world. Such growth may be considered as supreme value because:

1. The greatest worth for man is to be found in this experience of growth.
2. Its potentialities are unknown; it possesses an inherent worthfulness that transcends present knowledge.
3. It is basic to increasing effectiveness in living.
4. It makes possible and implies the most efficient (in terms of interpersonal relations) world that can be realized and is the only way by which this efficiency may be attained.<sup>11</sup>

We also may consider God as *being* this growth of value and meaning in the world. So understood, God becomes a supra-human process but not a supernatural one. God can therefore be found in full and complete human self-realization and in thoroughgoing understanding of our kinship with the rest of mankind. It follows then, that an understanding of God and our attainment of Him can become a reality in our lives. However, somewhere in the process, we must cast off the binding trictures of egocentricity if we are to achieve the integrity and freedom that will make our search successful. But, even before we begin our search, we must be endowed with the strength that only good and effective adjustment can give. In the structuring and the development of this adjustment, the

<sup>11</sup> H. Wieman, and R. Wieman, *A Normative Psychology of Religion*, New York, Rowell, 1935, p. 51.

knowledge psychology has made available will be essential. In a sense, we already have the "know-how" for assisting us in our search for God but in general, we just have not applied it. In large measure, it is true that, in others, we not only find ourselves but also God. The eleventh century Persian poet, Abdul Mansur, said it this way:

No one could tell me what my soul might be:  
I searched for God, and God eluded me;  
I sought my brother out, and found all three,  
My soul, my God and all humanity.

In order to reach a perspective from which we are able to view ourselves in our relation to mankind, certain steps are necessary.

1. We must regard our parents as the human beings they were. We must recognize that, in the light of their convictions, they did what they believed to be right. We must forgive whatever real or imagined injustices we experienced from them.
2. We must see ourselves in perspective. We must recognize that as an individual, we are a lonely, striving creature. We must develop a faith in a power greater than ourselves.
3. We must look at ourselves realistically. We must recognize that we possess aggressive impulses and that these tendencies are a part of our natural make-up. We must accept ourselves as we are.
4. We must subscribe to the conviction that man is basically good, that he can achieve the goals he sets for himself, and that he responds positively to positive treatment. We must accept the path to these beliefs as leading through self-realization, self-recognition, self-acceptance, and faith.<sup>12</sup>

There are other contributions that psychology can make to religion. These lie in the knowledge and skills that are effective in the transmission of a functional religion to men. There is a vast store of practical information that awaits the Christian educator (of church or seminary) who is willing to search it out. Over twenty years ago, these contributions were described by one Christian educator as follows:

1. Objective rather than subjective understanding of human behavior.

<sup>12</sup> S. Blanton, *Love or Perish*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1956.

## 332 *Problems of Human Adjustment*

2. The ability to regard man more as an engineer looks at a bridge than as a judge may view a case.
3. The general principles of growth and development.
4. Knowledge of the conditions under which "normal" growth is optimum.
5. Understanding of the laws of learning and those bearing upon the guidance and control of behavior.
6. Understanding of the typical problems man faces and of the forms his inefficient resolution of them takes with a consequent ability to recognize the symptoms of behavior disorders.
7. A practical understanding of the principles of adequate personality development.
8. Insight into the important causes of maladjustment.
9. Skill in the special techniques of interviewing, counseling, obtaining a case history, and of establishing rapport.
10. Learning the techniques of adapting therapeutic procedures to the unique demands of the individual.<sup>13</sup>

### NECESSARY ATTITUDES

Certain attitudes are necessary before such knowledge can be applied effectively. Anyone who hopes to put it to work must regard his fellow man permissively and acceptingly. He should have no particular bias toward what man "ought" to be, and he should be genuinely interested in people *as individuals*; he will have little long-term success if he regards men only as "souls to be saved." Jesus warned us repeatedly against tendencies to sit in judgment upon our fellows and against the use of our own personal standards in our judgment of mankind. Nevertheless, the religionist traditionally has tried to direct and control human behavior through a moralizing directiveness; man has been *told* what to do and threatened with dire prediction if he did not do it. Unfortunately, whether in church or clinic, direct, advice-giving procedures, exhortation, and implied threat simply do not work toward long-range changes in the life styles of people. *Telling us* humans what we *should* do and damning us if we don't do it has, for some two thousand years, failed to make any significant

<sup>13</sup> H. Wieman, and R. Wieman, *A Normative Psychology of Religion*, New York, Crowell, 1935, p. 428.

changes in our behavior. There is abundant evidence, however, to show that effective changes in behavior *can* be obtained if this change is permitted to *grow* out of conditions that:

1. Emphasize personal growth instead of personal problems.
2. Are sensitive to emotional feelings rather than intellectualized attitudes.
3. Attempt to understand the *immediate situation* as it is affecting the person's behavior *now*.
4. Recognize the counselor-counselee relationship itself as an opportunity for *growth* experience.<sup>14</sup>

Only the person who is strong and secure enough to resist the love of authority will be able to forego the ego-bolstering desire to "do good" in human lives. The principles of effective interpersonal relations have been known at least since the Sermon on the Mount. There *are* things we humans can do to make ourselves more effective, and also to be a real value to our fellow man. These ways of behaving incorporate the personal humility and the faith in the inherent ability of man to make his own choice that Jesus taught. In everyday language for everyday application, we can summarize these ways as follows:

#### 1. CONTROL

The principle here is this: "No man can be effective in controlling the behavior of others until he first has learned how to control himself." This implies all the characteristics of good adjustment we already have described. It means that we must keep our new brain actively surveying our own behavior so that our *feelings* are kept out of our judgments as much as possible. We must be willing to pay the consequent price in *tension* and must have worked out some personal and acceptable ways of relieving it as it accumulates. Control implies self-knowledge and self-acceptance.

#### 2. LISTEN

The first step in effective listening is: "Keep your big mouth shut!" Beware of passive listening; *hear* what your fellow man has

<sup>14</sup> O. Rank, *Will Therapy*, New York, Knopf, 1936; C. Rogers, *Counseling and Psychotherapy*, Boston, Houghton-Mifflin, 1942; C. Rogers, and R. Dymond, *Psychotherapy and Personality Change*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1954.

to say; keep your listening active. Here, the need for personal humility stands out clearly. In any case, you should know that so long as he has something on his chest, your fellow man won't listen to *you* anyway. Consequently, you may as well *hear* him out. You will gain nothing by the argument that will result if you break in before he is ready to listen to you.

### 3. EXPLAIN

Be very sure that the other fellow understands clearly the intents and goals of your joint effort. Tell him, ask him to tell you, and then work together toward the desired end. Enlist and encourage his coöperation and support. Remember that you, as the guiding person, have the privilege of assisting your fellow man into more effective ways but *not* the right. Through your behavior, you must earn his respect and confidence. A mutual understanding, gained at the outset through thorough and patient explanation, will save you many a problem later on.

### 4. STRESS POSITIVES

Put yourself in his position and look at the situation through his eyes. Remember that he will react to you as you *appear* to be to him. He will regard you in terms of the way you *behave*; he cannot see behind your behavior into your heart. As a consequence, he will treat you as the kind of person your *behavior* indicates you to be. You, therefore, must be able to see beyond your own needs if you are to be effective with others. Furthermore, you must believe, as articles of your own faith, that man is basically good, that he wants to be a right sort of person, that he will respond to positive treatment, and that he has the potential to achieve his goals. You must, therefore, look for the good in him and, having found it, emphasize this good as a foundation for building.

### 5. CONSIDER THE MAN AS A PERSON

Whether or not we humans *have* the right to be treated as individuals, we all *believe* that we do. So, in so far as our attitudes and behaviors may be concerned, it amounts to the same thing. Remember: "What man *believes* to be true, *is* true for him in so far as his behavior is concerned." Keep in mind that from his point of view, he is a person with all attendant rights and privileges. Therefore, you must discover what *his* feelings, desires, needs, and motivations may be. In this aspect, your own inner wants become of distinct unimportance. When you can see the situation from the perspective



of *his* feelings, and viewpoint, you can begin to have some hope that you may be of help to him. Until you have achieved this perspective, you simply have no chance at all.

It becomes apparent that there is a basic necessity for good adjustment in both the leader and the led if interpersonal relations are to be effective. The need for an intelligent application of available knowledge to efforts to change man's behavioral development exists in all of our institutions. In particular, perhaps, there is a pressing mandate that this need be met by the church. Traditionally, the church has evaded this need through its appeals to authority and its refusal to emerge from the past.

Only the person, cleric, or clinician, who has equipped himself with the knowledge of man psychology has discovered, and who is well-enough adjusted so that he feels no strong need to enhance his own ego, can possibly be of any real help in assisting his fellow man out of the morass of anxiety. When, however, a man has developed this knowledge and insight, he can be most effective. He can help the grief-stricken to regain balance and optimism, he can aid the fearful and anxious toward increased faith and confidence, he can assist the insecure along the way to security, and he can help the embittered to find goodness in man. In general, he can be of service to his fellows in their efforts to increase their sense of personal worth, to feel a part of all mankind, and to find trust in life. He can be effective in guiding youth and in helping them to find an adequate philosophy of life. In the absence of this knowledge and this personal integrity, he will only confuse thinking and increase anxiety.

### **LIBERAL RELIGION**

Let us now examine the basic concepts of liberal religion to see how they fit with the standards of good adjustment. Let us see how the credo of a liberal religion meets the demands of growth. Remember that the religious traditionalist, by marching resolutely into the past, insists upon an authoritarian regime. The credo of the liberal religionist follows:

We *believe* that the chief end of man—what he truly wills when he is fully conscious of his will—is the fulfillment of all his capacities and powers, in their rational unity.

We *believe* that what this fullness of life means is gradually learned through the sincere struggle to attain it.

We *believe* that each man's self-realization includes that of all men.

We *believe* that the universe is such that righteousness has at least a chance to triumph.

We *believe* that God is to be thought of as the perfect fulfillment of all our capacities and powers, as the Perfect Person of our ideal; that this ideal is the supreme reality of life; that He ever exists on earth in the degree that life unfolds toward His perfection.

We *believe* that we are free; that, in the last resort, we ourselves are responsible for our lives; that, included in the determinism of science is our own self-determination.

We *believe* in science, together with its necessary faiths, as an integral part of our faith: and we encourage it as the most efficient means man discovered for transforming both nature and human nature toward the end of life which is our supreme faith and for which all our other faiths exist.<sup>15</sup>

In this description of human faith, we find a rational, *reasoned* approach to our relationship with the Ultimate in life. There is no appeal through formal logic, no prattle about "pure reason" (as though it could be dissociated from the person), no emotionalized pleas, and no threatful dogma. In this credo, we find only the application of the potential within the new brain to the most difficult and uncertain problem man has to face. Within this faith, there is a tolerance and permissiveness that is quite in contrast to the authoritarianism of traditional precepts. In this perspective, we, you and I as human beings, are permitted to adapt our faith to our individual needs, heeding only the warning that we should not go beyond the bounds of rationality. Here is a structure of human-suprahuman relations that meets the known demands for effective living. Within the limits defined by *this* credo, there is *hope* for man. Here is defined the task, plan, and free-

<sup>15</sup> J. Hudson, "The New Orthodoxy and Human Progress," in H. Wieman, and others, *Religious Liberals Reply*, Boston, Beacon, 1947, pp. 70-71. Reproduced by permission of The Beacon Press.

dom within which man may develop his potential; within this doctrine, we are permitted to *grow*. The basic needs for an effective adjustment to life are met and implemented.

As you will recall, life conditions that (within the limits of cultural permissibility, of course) narrow our freedom to explore within our plan while we are engaged in our task only restrict and stultify our effectiveness. "Thou shalt" and "Thou shalt not" that unnecessarily reduce the potential plasticity of our behavior severely hamper our most fortunate of gifts—the basic flexibility with which we are born. In its original form, this plasticity is amply broad to include genuine feelings of kinship with others *providing* that no authoritarian and fear-producing restrictions distort and hinder its growth. The authoritarian parent rears a shrinking, retreating, and fearful child; the authoritarian church continues and implements such feelings of worthlessness in the adult. In this respect, both the authoritarian parent and the authoritarian church are vampires that drain off man's basic security in order to maintain a kind of life through a type of behavioral control that has been moribund for centuries.

### **MAN'S POTENTIAL**

Do not, for a single instant, discount man's potential nor yet the extent of its expression that he may attain through his own convictions. Look back into the material concerning the identity of mind and body within us. Think back to our discussion of the Psychosomatic relationships and see the things *man can do* when his "faith" is great enough. True, this is an inward-turning faith and expresses itself in undesirable behavior patterns *but*, if man can do so much to harm himself, may he not do even more to promote his welfare? He has but to learn that this process *can* be used to his advantage, but he will never learn this so long as we try to *scare* him into behaving as we believe he should. It is no more than reasonable to expect that if we humans completely can distort our attitude-behavior reference to life through unfortunate emotional convictions, that we also can use this force to build a much more solid life

structure than we ordinarily have achieved. Since behavior, of whatever sort, is a function of attitude, the task is clear. We must see to it that our life conditions are those designed maximally to produce the kind of *attitudes* that make effective living not only possible, but inevitable! If man can grow an ulcer through worry, surely he can grow trust and confidence through love. Right at this point lies man's choice, a choice the theologians commonly call "free will." In contrast to the theologians, however, this ability to choose emerges from positive and healthy training—a training that only *we* as parents, as church, and as school can give.

The good life, whether viewed through the knowledge of the psychologist or seen through the teachings of Jesus, is characterized by terms like "balance," "stability," "integrity," "optimism," "courageousness," "consistency," "sociability." We know that these desirables are attainable only when man has freedom to learn by doing. Religion can be a genuine motivating agency in the development and maintenance of these traits, but it will only work against them so long as fascistic authority is its mode of control. Ironically, it was a fascistic regime that crucified Christ.

Midnight and blackness for mankind  
because men ever refuse to be themselves  
to be what God created them to be.  
In their futile and poignant search for happiness  
in their mania for escape from reality  
their lives are mean indeed.  
In their quest of power  
and its misuse when finally attained  
are surely the seeds of disintegration.  
For man would come by happiness with ease  
with slippery methods  
with over quick results.  
Yet happiness we know too well  
is solely the product of inner peace.  
This is what I now prize and hold dearest worth;  
The knowledge that happiness will come  
only when the mind is at peace  
only when one feels within oneself a soul pulled  
together with one consuming purpose.

Now I know that to live completely  
is to live selflessly  
to give with all one's might to one great ideal.  
Now I know that true happiness comes from service to  
one's fellow creatures  
that the losing of life for your ideal of life  
is the discovery of life.  
Now I know that giving is the way for both the  
giver and the receiver.  
If I write, I shall write with the joy of others as my purpose.  
If I heal, it will be for the satisfaction of the healing  
to my brother.  
If I build, it will be to give man the comfort of a home.  
If I sing or play, it will be for the pleasure that is  
mine to give.  
If I walk with men as guide  
it will be for the happiness I seek in giving all I have  
for the love of them.  
If I love (as surely I must), I shall give myself completely  
to my lover, and if I marry for the child  
our love produces.  
If I teach, it will be for the youth I hold within the spell  
of knowledge.  
If I go on missions, it will be without regret to give all I  
have in selfless dedication.

Now I know that happiness is the mastery of oneself which  
comes from settling what one is and living with that self  
without regret.  
Now I know the cardinal sin, the one monstrous deception—  
is self-deception.  
First of all, be what you are and with the help of God  
what he would have you be.  
Now I know that the light men truly seek comes ever  
from within.  
This light from within alone will pierce the midnight  
and the blackness.  
You and I and everyone can hold this light of peace and  
happiness to all those lost in darkness  
If we but be the light.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Reproduced from *Motive*, May, 1947, vol. vii, No. 8, by permission of the editor and author, Harold Ehrensperger.

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## 12. MATURITY IN OLD AGE

A happy youth, and their old age  
is beautiful and free.

—Wordsworth, *The Fountain*

A COMMON THEME THROUGHOUT OUR DISCUSSION OF man and his make-up has been the necessity for *plasticity* in behavior if we are to live really effective lives. Nowhere, perhaps, is this need so important as in later life. However, just as the time to prepare for adult living should be found in childhood, so, too, the time to prepare for old age is *right now*. Old age is an inevitable consequence of our having lived, and we are stupid indeed if we refuse to recognize this fact. The aging process, as an inescapable biological result of having stayed alive through the years, should be part and parcel of our *ordinary* expectations in life itself.

The growing maturity of our living that terminates in a phase we term “old age” is a constant process that begins at inception and ceases only at death. A consequence of this fact is the necessity to realize that old age does not “begin” at any stated chronological period in life; *old age begins at birth*—if not even at the moment the genes unite. The maturing process is a continuing one throughout our entire life span, and it is a process of constant change; it is not one of fits and starts. We all *grow* old as the years pass by; this growing is a *continuously* on-going process; we artificially break it up into the periods of infancy, childhood, youth, adulthood, later maturity, and old age sheerly for our own convenience. As we have had occasion to see before, these categories of convenience have no reality in human behavior—they are the products of the human mind and reflect its liking for pigeonholes.

An equally human tendency is to postpone action on any

problem that is not present within the very immediate future. As a people, we deal with issues only when we are faced with them bluntly and *must* do something. A consequence of this human trend is that most of us live into senescence (extreme old age) with little or no understanding of its nature and in the absence of preparing for its advent. Yet, the problem of old age is exactly like any problem; when we recognize it and do something to get ready for it, much of its "problem" status disappears. Therefore, our task in this life area will be to show you that while all of us must *grow* old, we need not *become* old.

As we look at the facts within old age, we shall discover that we humans often are the victims of sheer social expectancy. In our culture, it is unfortunately true that the word "usefulness" applies to definite age ranges. This, despite the evidence that there is no natural relationship whatsoever between age and effectiveness. We shall see that there is abundant evidence and that there are ample facts to show how completely wrong is the commonly accepted belief that we "outlive our value." Just as we have tried to dispel the myths typically surrounding sex, marriage, vocation, and religion, so also shall we try to remove the malignant superstitions that too long have forced the old person into psychological stagnation and premature death.

If we look at the life attitudes and the behavior of our aged people, we discover how tragically true is the statement: "What people believe to be true *is* true for them." Our old people, cast in the role of dotard by a society steeped in traditional myth, accept their parts and wait, in resigned apathy, for the final curtain. Yet, we who perpetuate this myth are fools. We are destroying our own civilization through our insistence that basic superstition be fundamental fact. We rapidly are becoming a progressively older people and we have no choice but to make places for our oldsters if we want life, as we know it in these United States, to maintain itself.

### **AGE CHANGES**

The nature of the growing change in the average age of the human population may be seen in the following facts. In



2000 B.C., our average age at death was 18; by 400 B.C., it was about 22; in A.D. 1800, it had risen to 35; and by 1900, it was 49. In 1935, life expectancy stood at 61; in 1945, it was 66; and it now averages close to 70. At present, there are about 14,000,000 men and women in our country who are 65 years old or more. If current trends continue, there will be some

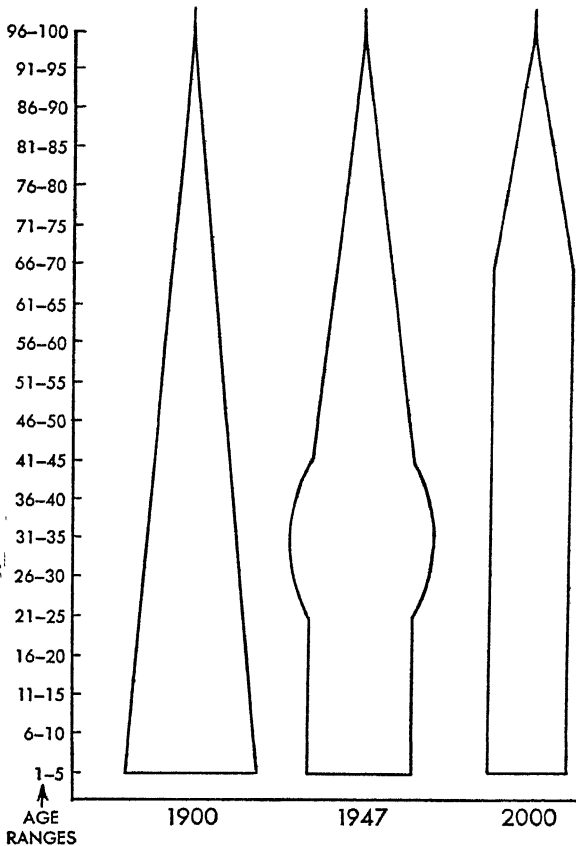


FIGURE 22. Diagrams Showing Variations (Actual and Expected) in the Age Distribution of Our Population. (Drawn from a description given by L. Frank, "The Older Person in the Changing Social Scene," in G. Lawton [Ed.], *New Goals for Old Age*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1943, p. 38.)

26,000,000 people 65 or over in the year 2000. This number will represent about 20 percent of our population at that time.<sup>1</sup>

Something of the situation can be seen in the accompanying diagram. In graphic form, you are shown the age changes in our population during the current century. It should be obvious that we quite rapidly are becoming an older and older people. We should not, we *cannot*, if we hope for the future, ignore these facts.

Our traditional attitude toward and treatment of the aged within our society have been characterized by an irrationality so complete that only man could have conceived it. Nevertheless, however comfortable our traditional rut may be, we must, as we hope for survival, begin to recognize and to accept the old person for what he *is*, a valuable, useful, and necessary social tool. For years and through millions of dollars, we have fought to conserve our forests and wild life. Should we not work with at least equal vigor for the conservation of man? Someone once said: "We pay infinite attention to the incubator and neglect the egg!" Of course, it is not youth that must be served, but old age—*because it has served*.

### CONSERVATION OF MAN

For centuries, we have accepted as fact a social attitude expressed by the poet Thomas Hood (who died at 47) a hundred years ago:

When he is forsaken,  
Withered and shaken,  
What can an old man do but die?

We are coming to recognize that the "withered and shaken" aspect of old age is a direct result of our social habit of "for-saking" the aged. We humans age almost completely in terms of our own *expectation* of aging. The tragedy is that we perceive this expectation in the behavior of our fellow men toward us. So long as people in general tend to think of the aging process

<sup>1</sup> L. Dublin, A. Lotka, and M. Spiegelman, *Length of Life*, New York, Ronald, 1949.

as an inevitable decline in all the useful attributes of life, just so long will age and futility appear to be synonymous. When, however, you and I change our characteristic attitude toward old age, social expectation will follow along. Custom, social attitudes, and the like merely reflect majority conviction. To change, therefore, the "attitude" of the culture, it becomes necessary to change the attitudes of most of the people who compose it.

There is both optimism and hope within this fact. What man has made, man can change—if he elects to do so. What we humans have built, we can remodel. The hope and the more reasonable expectation is expressed in these lines by Walt Whitman (who lived to be 73):

Youth, large, lusty, loving—Youth full of grace, force,  
fascination!

Do you know that Old Age may come after you, with equal  
grace, force, fascination?

The optimism we have mentioned lies in the facts that have been discovered about what happens to us as we age. We shall see that the usual expectation contains certain elements of truth, but elements only. When verifiable fact and social expectation collide head-on, the usual outcome is a complete collapse of the expectation. These social expectations that most of us carry about in our heads are called "stereotypes." One of our tasks in this chapter is to puncture the stereotype that age and progressive futility go hand in hand. This job can and will be done. In fact, since we are becoming a progressively older people, we must admit usefulness to old age or find ourselves living in a culture one-fifth of whose population is parasitical. The options to *not* solving our "old-age problem" are most unpleasant. Actually, of course, this "problem" is a pseudoproblem, as are most of those we humans manage to conjure up out of a fertile but poorly directed imagination.

### **ATTITUDES AND OLD AGE**

In our effort to change our typical outlook upon old age, we face, however, a danger even yet more serious. We carry about

another stereotype that tells us: "Old dogs can't learn new tricks." Unfortunately, just so long as the "old dog" *believes* this to be true, it will be true for him. The facts are better stated by: "Old dogs can learn any new trick that the old dogs *want* to learn." True enough, the liking for "progressive" people trails off after age 45, although just how much of this change in preference is a function of what oldsters expect to happen is an unanswered question. Nevertheless, the fact that this attitude exists is cause for alarm. We know that we are facing an era when change may be so great that extensive social reorganization may be demanded. We will be in a fine fix indeed if we try to meet rapidly changing demands with a population that contains an increasing number of people who believe that they are too old to change anything. Any group that has a sizable membership of people who believe that they are too old to change, and therefore will not *try*, runs into serious difficulties when it becomes faced with the mandate: "Change or die!" Under the impact of the tremendous technological forces now being brought to bear upon us, we just better be fast on our cultural feet. We very badly need more understanding and less myth about the abilities of the aged.

While we shall get farther into details later, the general situation seems to be this: When the old person tries to learn a new thing that conflicts directly with his established habits, he runs into trouble. When the new thing supplements, or is supported by, his established habits, he has little difficulty. In this fact, there is all the reason in the world why it is so essential to train ourselves for our old age throughout our lives. The habits we have can conflict with or supplement the demands of a changing world, depending upon the ways we learn in our earlier life. Once again, the home, the school, the church, and the person himself can do much to make the aging process a gentle one, but this will not be done so long as we slavishly continue to worship the past. In general, however, the oldster who says he is too lazy, too stubborn, or too discouraged to learn may be exactly right. But, when he says that he is too *old* to learn, he is dead wrong!

Age is a quality of mind.  
If you have left your dreams behind,  
If hope is cold,  
If you no longer look ahead  
If your ambitions' fires are dead  
Then you are old.

But if from life you take the best,  
And if in life you keep the jest,  
If love you hold;  
No matter how the years go by,  
No matter how your birthdays fly,  
You are not old.

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

As all of us realize, bodily activity slows down with increasing age. This "running down" of bodily functions is a natural and normal consequence of having stayed alive over the years. Living and aging are inseparable. Many of us, however, blindly refuse to accept this biological fact although very few of us would expect our auto to function as efficiently ten years after its manufacture as it did during the first. Furthermore, we generally do not blame the motor when, after thousands of driving miles, it begins to show signs of wear. Moreover, all of us know that we, as owners, can do a great deal to prevent undue wear upon our car. Regular lubrication, oil changes, mechanical checkups, and general preventive maintenance help to keep our automobile at maximum efficiency and to ease our minds of the possibility of sudden breakdown. Along with this care, we rather expect that as our car ages, it will become increasingly inefficient. Actually, all we have to do is to apply the same principles of preventive maintenance and the same general attitudes toward ourselves. Precisely in this same manner may we maintain our own efficiency at top potential. Just as we anticipate that we must think about the possibility of ignition or carburetion failure as our car ages, so too must we know about the failures that aging can bring to us. As we could say of an old and faithful auto: "The body's in bad shape, but the motor

runs fine," so also, if we are willing, can we maintain our personal motor in good running order.<sup>2</sup>

Through the human tendency to push things to extremes, we have come to believe that as we age, we become increasingly ineffective intellectually. Within our cultural myth lies the conviction that the older we get the dumber we become. This simply is not true. This inaccurate belief has arisen from the relationships discovered between age and *scores on intelligence tests*. These results show that we reach a peak in our rate and speed of learning at about age 22. From this high point on, there is a very slow decline until we reach our eighties. At about age 80, our learning *speed* has dropped until it is about equal to the learning rate of a child of 12. *However*, quickness in learning is far from being the whole story and, anyway, who would accuse a twelve-year-old of being an ineffective learner? As parents, you may recognize that at this age the youngster may "learn" altogether too rapidly for your own comfort!

The other side of this coin (commonly ignored) shows that *accuracy* increases with age and once our peak in accuracy is reached, we continue at this high level until quite advanced old age sets in. Furthermore, our life *experience* permits us to bring increasing amounts of understanding and judgment into play. This ability to bring past experience into play lasts well into the eighties. So long as we have kept ourselves in reasonably good health, have continued our intellectual interests, and have kept our minds open, we just need not fear an encroaching stupidity as we get older. The inability to think clearly is not related to age *so long* as we are healthy. However, if we *believe* that old age and feeble-mindedness go hand in hand, then, for us, they *will*. Think back to what we have had to say about the relationship between *faith* and *bodily comfort*. In the light of these facts, keep your spirit high, and work to keep your mind clear. Keep in mind that there is nothing of the inevitable between old age and the ability to think *unless* you are convinced that such a relation exists.

Additional ammunition can be found in the fact that even

<sup>2</sup> You can find an interesting and authoritative account of the biology of the aging process in E. Stieglitz, *The Second Forty Years*, Philadelphia, Lippincott, 1946.

the relationships that are established through the medium of intelligence tests refer to average scores made by members of the varying age groups. The *individual differences* within each of these age groups often exceed the average differences themselves. Therefore, very little can be said about any individual through the data obtained from these average scores. In fact, your ability to think *cannot* be predicted by knowing how old you are. We therefore can say that in so far as the individual person is concerned, there is no relationship between age and the ability to learn; only when *groups* of people at various ages are tested do the ordinarily ascribed relationships appear. So, *your* concern can center only about your own willingness to *stay alert* and to *keep thinking*. The very best insurance for a healthy old age is to keep on learning and to keep on working at something so long as life persists.

Actually, what happens to innate ability as we age is relatively unimportant. What is important, is what we do with whatever innate ability we may have. When we think in terms of accomplishment rather than measured degrees of intelligence, we find that youth defers to age in a hurry. Although individual variance is great, the productive years commonly appear during the time from forty upwards. Those achievers who continue to produce (as contrasted with those who make "one great discovery") often are producing vigorously in their eighties. With such persons, the motor stops only when the body no longer can carry it. Moreover, the suggestion is strong that when we humans maintain intellectual interest and accomplishment throughout our lives, we are much less likely to experience the intellectual decline most of us fear. The habit of "intellectual exercise" seems to maintain our intellectual alertness so long as we may live. In fact, the more intellectually able we are initially, the lesser the degree of decline we may show. The facts would seem to be that the motivated, intellectually curious person shows greater intelligence at *whatever* age he may be tested.

Of course, it is only good sense to expect that so long as we continue to use such ability as we may possess, we continue to grow in intellectual stature. When we do this, we can expect that, barring accident or serious illness, we will keep right on

growing; we will keep right on making increasing use of the judgment and skills our experience brings to us. With these additive factors of "mileage," we need to rely less and less on "pure intelligence" alone. While it is probably true that intellectual *vigor* decreases with age just as physical vigor decreases, nevertheless, much of this decline can be reduced when we begin an active intellectual life early in the game and continue it consistently. This is important. Old people who actively are engaged in *doing something* (either through employment or self-induced activity) do better on intelligence tests than groups of their age-mates who have "quit."

Certain mental skills deteriorate consistently with age. The most obvious and troublesome of these lies in an increasing inability to recall recent events. This results from degenerative changes that occur within the brain. May we repeat, just as physical vigor decreases, so too does intellectual vigor. Consequently, as we age, we should no more expect to recall the recent past as well as we once did any more than we should expect to be able to lift as heavy a weight as once we could. Nevertheless, the difficulty in recalling recent events often becomes a source of discouragement to us. This should not be and it need not be. In the first place, the degree of loss is not a tremendous one and is one for which we can compensate if we try. First of all, we must expect this to happen. As you are well aware, if you know that a thing will occur, you are in a much better position to deal with it than if it catches you unprepared. Actually, there is no really serious threat. All of us make use of "assists" as we get older. We wear glasses of increasing correction, we supplement our hearing with hearing aids, we replace worn-out teeth with "china clippers," and we can deal with a less predictable memory by developing the notebook habit. If we are concerned that we may not remember, all we need do is to write it down. In point of fact, the notebook habit is smart business at any age. Only those ignorant of the facts or complacently sure of themselves will trust implicitly to their own ability to recall with complete precision.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> If you doubt this statement, read F. Bartlett, *Remembering: A Study in Experimental and Social Psychology*, London, Cambridge University Press, 1932.



### CREATIVE IMAGINATION

As a counter to the real loss in immediate memory that age brings to us is the fact that creativity or "the highest process of interpretation and imagination" shows no decline whatsoever. People in their nineties, whose general health is sound, show as much creativity as that demonstrated by an adult population of any age. Both young and old show equal ability to demonstrate such creativeness as they may possess.<sup>4</sup>

This fact constitutes all the more reason why it is so essential that we remain intellectually *alert* throughout our lives. When creative imagination is ageless, there is just no excuse for the maintenance of the myth of an intellectual deterioration, rapid and complete, as we grow into old age. Most of our oldsters are precisely as intellectually feeble as they have expected to become.<sup>5</sup>

We already have had ample occasion to see that an overburden of emotion seriously can interfere with the adequate expression of intelligence. Even if no other factors were involved, we might well expect that intelligence as tested would decline with age sheerly as a function of the inadequacy feelings, the insecurities, the rejections, and their consequent feelings of worthlessness, helplessness, and isolation that traditionally are imposed upon our aging persons. Our cultural attitude toward age, based largely in superstition, almost forces the old person into an emotionalized conviction of futility and despair. How stupid can we get? We *know* that emotional upheaval may badly impair a youngster's score on an intelligence test. There is no reason whatsoever but to assume that the socially prescribed feeling of futility we force upon the oldster will have an identically detrimental effect. Until we can know how much the intellectual deterioration of old age is influenced by such emotional factors, we should be

<sup>4</sup> L. Ames, and others, *Rorschach Responses in Old Age*, New York, Hoeber, 1954.

<sup>5</sup> A highly readable account of the general story can be found in R. Coughlin, Now within sight; 100 year lifetime, *Life*, April 25, 1955, pp. 156 ff. Completely to be recommended is J. Gilbert, *Understanding Old Age*, New York, Ronald, 1952.

most cautious in our interpretations of the test scores made by varying age groups. It is by no means impossible that much of the differences obtained are artifacts of unfortunate emotional convictions and therefore are not "real."

### CULTURE INFLUENCE

As we have pointed out before, we humans tend to reflect in our own attitudes those beliefs that are current in our culture. When these social beliefs are in line with the facts, all is well. However, much too often these beliefs are *beliefs* only and have no basis in fact. Our cultural expectation that we reflect directly in our treatment of the older worker in industry is a particularly vicious mistake.

This generally accepted belief centers about the assumption that as we age we become progressively useless. We have presented evidence to show that this simply is not true. Unfortunately, however, as long as this social lie persists, we will tend to live with it. We become, you will recall, the kind of person that we have been trained to be. Remember also, that as a result of this training, we develop a self-image or ego-ideal (us as we see ourselves as being). Keep in mind that when this ego-ideal is compatible with reality, our adjustment to life is facilitated. Furthermore, the degree of our maladjustment is in direct relation to the size of the gap between the person we *are* and the person we believe ourselves to be. Consequently, we humans at any age react to life situations in terms of our own interpretation of what reality is. In a sense, the realities of life are filtered through a more or less distorting set of lenses that may convert these realities into inaccurate images. Think of Plato and his life in a cave allegory. By the time we reach adulthood, these lenses of bias can be quite permanently shaped and we have developed our characteristic outlook on life.

Now life involves continuous change. Therefore, it is quite possible that the world outlook we may develop under one set of conditions may become incompatible with the things that are in a later time. So long as we insist that the past is the only reliable guide to the future, so long can we expect such

incompatibilities to appear and so long will we make effective adjustment to life the more difficult for our old folks. A hundred years ago, when life expectancy hovered around forty, a man of fifty undoubtedly was *old*. When we maintain a similar attitude at the present, with life expectancy at seventy and rapidly going up, we have our heads shoved deeply into the sands of tradition. And remember, we humans scoff at the ostrich!

The sad facts, of course, are that so long as we believe a thing to be true, we will behave as though it were true. The consequences of this particular insistence, that what has been always must be, are almost criminal in their implications. Through this myth of identifying age with uselessness, we *force* futility upon our aged and then, in sound human fashion, damn them as cantankerous.

### **INDUSTRY AND AGE**

Industry undoubtedly bases its employment procedures upon antiquated life expectancy figures. Because of this subservience to the past, industry will not realize that a man of today has his best yet to give after age 45. We need to reëxamine our thinking and to redefine what we shall mean by the word "old." The myth, that the after-forty-five years are years of coasting, contains no more truth than any other myth man has made.

When we look to the facts, we discover that there is no relationship whatsoever between industrial productivity and the age of employees. There simply is *no evidence* for the common assumption that earning power decreases with advancing years. In fact, labor turnover is less with older employees than with younger ones, and men over forty are demonstrably greater assets than men in their twenties.

#### **MYTH**

Hiring older workers increases production costs.

#### **FACT**

93% of over 3000 companies say that workers 45 and over are equal to or superior in job performance to younger employees.

### 354 *Problems of Human Adjustment*

Older workers are more likely to be injured.	Investigation of over 17,000 cases shows the opposite to be true.
Older workers are absent from the job more frequently.	Study of over 16,000 cases shows older workers to have a 20% better attendance record.
Older workers throw pension plans out of line.	Only 20% of companies say they do not hire the older employee because of the pension problems involved. <sup>6</sup>

We must admit, of course, that the older worker tends to have somewhat more severe accidents when they do occur and that the older worker tends to recover more slowly. In general, a worker of 55 will take about thirty-four days to recover from an accident that would incapacitate a man of 22 only twenty-three days. Nevertheless, the older employee remains less expensive in terms of accident cost than younger workers.<sup>7</sup>

The advantages and disadvantages that the older worker presents to industry follow:

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Fewer accidents	Loses more time through illness
Reduction in job-training costs	Less ready to adapt to change
Output equal to younger men	Less strength and agility
Lower spoilage record	
Dependability, loyalty, responsibility	
Needs little supervision	

In general, the greater experience and skill the older worker possesses will counteract such losses in speed and strength as he may have undergone. The situation would seem to be this: Industry is interested in prolonging the productive lives of its workers, and we are in process of becoming an older population. It is therefore but good sense that industry carefully should examine the potentialities older workers may present. There is a vast store of better judgment, wisdom, and strategy

<sup>6</sup> J. Mitchell (U.S. Secretary of Labor), *Too old to work?*, *Collier's*, 1955, January 7, pp. 38 ff.

<sup>7</sup> N. Shock, *Older people and their potentialities for gainful employment*, *J. Geront.*, 1947, 2: 93-102.

latent within the life experience of our older folks that only awaits our willingness to tap it. Industry well could consider the following possibilities:

1. Shifting the worker as he ages from tasks placing demands upon strength and endurance to those necessitating judgment and work experience.
2. Initiating retraining programs that would assist the older worker in adjusting to the demands of jobs compatible with his capacities.
3. Installing medical programs that would assist the older employee in maintaining his efficiency and to prevent illness from becoming chronic.
4. Educating him regarding the role of nutrition, exercise, and play in the maintenance of health.
5. Training management itself in the facts that are known of the older worker and thus correcting the discrimination against him.
6. Recognizing that the solution of the problems of older employees is not to be found in pension and retirement programs so much as it is in ways to keep the worker producing that he may feel needed, wanted, and a useful part of the industrial economy. Pensioned idleness serves only to accelerate deterioration in old age.<sup>8</sup>

The long existing belief within American industry that the older worker constituted a production liability has been quite thoroughly exploded. The "Forty Plus Clubs" have been instrumental in this. The evidence showing that the older employee has a real and tangible contribution to make is now so abundant that it cannot longer be ignored. However, some educational procedures with management personnel undoubtedly will have to precede any general acceptance. The willingness with which the men of management (who, often as not, are within the older age brackets themselves) accept these ideas will be a measure of their own adaptability—or of their lack of it.

Yet, this problem is not a simple one. It presents a difficult dilemma. Should management capitalize on the experience of its older employees at the risk of losing younger men who will

<sup>8</sup> R. McFarland, The older worker in industry, *Harv. Bus. Rev.*, 1943, Summer: 505-520.

not wait interminably for advancement? This is no easy question to answer. However, if management is willing to *think* and to *plan*, the dilemma can be resolved. Here is what was done in one organization:

After over forty years of service, a vice-president was now in his seventies. Although a "young" seventy indeed, still vigorous, able, and contributing, there was discontent down the line. Younger men (in the middle-thirty and early-forty brackets) were asking themselves: "What's in this for me?" This question they had every right to ask. As long as the old gentleman was on top of the totem pole, there was little opportunity for upward movement for anyone. Management handled the issue by thoroughly discussing it with the oldster, enlisting his cooperation, and moving him over into an advisory-consultative role. This permitted a chain reaction of promotions that affected all departmental employees down to the trainees themselves. Morale perked up considerably. Furthermore, the erstwhile operating vice-president is now busily (and with reasonable happiness) engaged in recording his decades of experience with the Company. Beginning with the first problem he faced when he began his career, he is compiling a complete record of the successes and failures his area experienced during his contact with it. Management regards this recountal as the tremendous contribution it undoubtedly will be. Furthermore, here is one older person who just cannot feel age has brought him only futility.

The program in another company is as follows:

1. At age 55, all employees participate in group discussions of the general problems of retirement.
2. During the next five years, these employees receive regular information on retirement planning.
3. At age 60, each employee is interviewed by his department head. He is helped with questions about retirement benefits, financial problems, and professional help is available.
4. After age 60, the employee is interviewed yearly and such professional aid as may be indicated is supplied.
5. In his 65th year, the employee is given exact figures concerning his pension and is helped with a retirement program. He then retires with a full ten years of preparation behind him.

Programs such as these ease the shock and illustrate the great advantages of planning. Even so, the transition seldom

is an easy one. The fact that human beings are involved guarantees that difficulties will arise. When employees within a decade or so of retirement age are polled, they *say* in a proportion of about 8 to 2 that financial security is more important than having something to do after retirement. Certainly, we need to feel that we will be able to pay our own way but, we humans just have to experience the interminableness of empty time to realize what it means.

### **PLANNING FOR OLD AGE**

In the final analysis, however, the question of retirement is not so much one of what industry or other institutions can do as it is what we can do for ourselves. Ultimately, this is a personal problem, that appears in as many guises as there are old people who experience it. Characteristically, we humans seldom plan; we prefer to "cross that bridge when we come to it," in the complacent assumption that there will be a bridge there when we arrive. Ask people what they plan to do after they have retired. By and large, you will get answers like: "Oh, I don't know—just loaf, I guess." "I'm going to travel; I'm going to read; I'm going to fish; I'm going to follow the sun; I'm going to do all the things I've never had time for." In all of these, there lies only vague hope and expectation; in none of them is there much of a *plan*. Much too often, these folk find the anticipated pleasures wearing thin indeed once the original novelty has worn off. Commonly, they try haphazard ways of filling their time and then die.

W. C. had risen from a maintenance foreman to vice-president, in charge of production in a large manufacturing company. Actively and aggressively, he had worked for the organization for over forty years. It was literally true that he "lived" in and for his job. Since he had been with the company since its beginnings, he had grown as an intimate part of it and seemed to feel a personal responsibility for the success of each production procedure, however small. At age 65, although still alert and vigorous, he was retired after the usual swirl of dinners, parties, and grateful well-wishing. Within a week, he could be seen puttering about his home and grounds,

pace back and forth while grinding endless cigars into moist fragments. Whenever opportunity offered, he would question company executives about the outcome of plans made during his tenure. His interest was pathetic. Gradually, as he apparently became convinced that his retirement was actual and not a sort of bad dream, he became less and less active. The Country Club saw him no more and to inquiries, his wife would reply that he was "resting." Within three months from the date of his farewell dinner, he was dead. Although it is not certain, it is probable that W. C. had ten years of active and efficient service left in him when he was retired. Since his estate was valued at over \$4,000,000, money matters were unimportant; it was the doing *nothing* that could not be borne.

This unfortunately is a rather typical case whether the person involved be executive or worker. We struggle valiantly for success often to discover that when we have attained it, we have forgotten how to enjoy life. Often our goal of financial security appears so needful and we compete so strongly to reach it, that we lose perspective. We have labored so long in one direction that we no longer can move in others. Consequently, when our major motive is removed, there is nothing to do but die. The death certificate may read "cardiac failure," but what should appear there is "retirement shock." Money alone is just not enough.<sup>9</sup>

When we begin our work life, we also should begin our plan of retirement. It always is just plain smart for us humans to know where we are going. However, most of us just *go*. When we vaguely say that we will read, write, garden, work with wood, metal, leather, or whatever, sleep, lie about, or loaf, we usually but make a blind promise it will be impossible for us to keep. We must do more than merely discuss the problem, we must do something about it. This doing demands a plan and a program. Working out a program of action takes effort, and we do not achieve without this. Keep well in mind that you simply cannot shift suddenly from one kind of life into another without undergoing some shock in the process. When, how-

<sup>9</sup> T. Desmond (N.Y. State Senator, Chairman, N.Y. State Joint Legislative Committee on Problems of the Aging), "You Can't Retire on Your Money Alone," in *Young at Any Age*, p. 140; see also—The Generations, *Wall Street Journal*, April 30, 1956.



ever, the transition already is in process as the day of retirement draws near, you are ready and, being ready, are able. The choice is yours: Plan now and retire into happiness or don't plan and retire into death.

If you are considering any particular activity for your life after work, begin right now to investigate this activity. Test it on yourself for such things as adequacy of satisfaction, genuineness of interest, reality of enjoyment. If you find that you *can* do the thing effectively and that it maintains your interest, continue to do it in increasing degree as your retirement nears. When the day then comes, you will be ready to move into another area of *activity* for which you are prepared and that you know you will enjoy doing. Change, for which we are prepared, never shocks us.

The very essence of maturity in old age is that we do not cease to live constructively. Our great physiologist, Dr. A. J. Carlson (who enjoyed life through an active 81), had a formula. He called it the 3 W's and the 3 D's. It goes like this: "Work, Work, Work; from Diaper Days until Death." As we have said repeatedly, the *living* of life is a process of continuous *growth*. When we stop *growing*, we die. Constructive effort has no equal in guaranteeing this growth. Whatever our age in years may be, when we stop learning and achieving, we cease to *be*. Of course, we may continue to age but, for all practical purposes, we are already dead. The only difference between a rut and a grave is one of dimension.

### **FUNCTIONAL LIVING**

Functional living is a privilege of old age. After a lifetime of experience, we can begin to put loose ends together and to reflect upon life itself and its meaning. When we have planned and prepared ourselves for late maturity, its arrival is only a goal for which we are ready. Our own trip through life, with all the frustration, pain, and suffering that it may involve, should but leave us more understanding of the lives of those who are following. These are values that having lived can bring. If we look for them as we pass along life's way, incor-

porate them into our own experience, and learn as we do, we are then in a position to understand and to help our fellows.

Let me grow lovely, growing old,  
So many fine things to do,  
Laces and ivory and gold  
And silks need not be new.

And there is healing in old trees,  
Old trees a glamour hold;  
Why may not I, as well as these,  
Grow lovely, growing old?

—AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Experience is the great enlarger of life. If any virtue whatsoever attaches itself to living, it is that this living should equip us to make increasingly more efficient adaptations to life's demands. It is precisely this broadening of life's horizons that occurs within the well-adjusted person. However, many of us retreat and withdraw as we age. When the one-celled paramecium is threatened by sudden changes in its watery environment, it encysts (curls into itself and becomes immobile). For the paramecium, this is an advantageous reaction. Encysting, however, is only self-defeating when we humans try it. Yet, try it we do. Too often, as we age, we stagnate. We try to stand still while time swirls around us, we tend to view the world as a hostile and threatening place, we perceive only fear where once we found security. Like the paramecium, we draw deeply into ourselves but unlike the paramecium (presumably), we also weep to ourselves over the things that once have been. We forget that we will not find security by standing still however effective our original pose may have been. We ignore the fact that our only justification for staying alive is that we make something constructive out of the experiences life has granted us. We try to live in fancy and steadfastly ignore fact.

As we age, we need to be continuously aware of the tendency to encyst. First, because it is a most inefficient way of adapting, and second, because it symbolizes a rejection of the world. This, none of us can afford. When we encyst, we attempt to turn time back; a process invidious in approach and vicious in

result. When we do this, we tend to remember ourselves as predominantly "good." We always try to justify our position and, having encysted, we indulge in a process of selective recall in which only those life events favorable to us are remembered. It is only the *old* person who reacts against time and sees himself as virtuous while the current world is wicked. We forget entirely the follies of our yesterdays: "We certainly never did things like this in *our* day. I don't know what this younger generation is coming to!" This has been the cry of the ancient rebel against himself since the dawn of recorded history. At least 4000 years ago, an old priest in ancient Egypt said the same, identical thing. We forget our own violations of the social code, or we recall them so vividly that we must repress the memories by a blustering self-righteousness. It is quite true that only the secure can be tolerant.

King Solomon and King David  
Led very merry lives  
With very many concubines  
And very many wives.

Until old age came creeping  
With very many qualms  
Then Solomon wrote the Proverbs  
And David wrote the Psalms.<sup>10</sup>

Beyond the fact that these attitudes of youth damnation are evidence that the colonic rigidity sometimes characteristic of age has invaded the cortex, the right of the older person to such judgments is based upon an erroneous assumption. Stated briefly, this assumption is that age and wisdom increase together. Actually, there is nothing inevitable in this relationship. "Age" by no means equals "wisdom." Wisdom, and the respect we give to it, is a thing to be earned. It is not an honorarium that automatically is granted with passing years. Only when the knowledge, the experience, and the judgment on which wisdom is based is garlanded with understanding and tolerance can the old person anticipate respect. The probabili-

<sup>10</sup> From: G. Lawton, *Aging Successfully*, New York, College University Press, 1946, p. 55. Reproduced by permission.

ties are that those oldsters, who insist upon respect just because they are *old*, are the same people who, in their youth, demanded their rights just because they *wanted* them. They forget that the young fool usually but grows into an old one and that even the moron may mature.

### **LIFE AND DEATH**

Our life outlook must be based in the conviction that only in so far as our behavior is *constructive* are we a creditor to society. Then, and only then, does society owe anything to us. Concurrent with this general attitude should go a realistic and fearless acceptance of the fact of death. We must somehow come to accept death as the natural end to earthly life itself. We can find some guidance in Thomas Mann's statement: "Be ashamed to die until you have won some victory for humanity." This "victory" need not make the headlines to be real and effective.

In general, it is when we ultimately realize that our lives have been empty and futile that we fear the eternity we call death. Having lived a full and constructive life makes it easier for us to feel content when the end draws near. In any case, it is not death itself that frightens so many of us, but the *fear* of death. We are not so afraid of *death* as we are concerned about our fear of it; it is a fancy rather than a fact that disturbs us. One reason for this lies in the generalized apprehensiveness with which we humans have surrounded this ultimate *fact* of living. We are frightened by fear itself. Fear of something that, willy-nilly, *is going to occur* cannot be held as rational behavior and certainly is not in line with the tenets of good adjustment.

When we are well adjusted, we do not fear death. We are not afraid for the same reason that we have been unafraid through life. We have *prepared* ourselves for the actualities of life, and their occurrence is therefore not a matter for deep concern. We recognize the inevitability of death, we accept the fact that we, too, must sometime meet it, and we can regard death as just another *experience* at the end of a life well filled and adequate. We share with Walt Whitman:

Come lovely and soothing death  
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,  
In the day, in the night, to all, to each  
Sooner or later, delicate death.

In the main, death does arrive serenely, without awareness and without fear. This is not difficult to understand. Think of the thousands of times you have drifted off to sleep. Were you aware of the instant that sleep overwhelmed you or were you frightened of it? Until you awakened, were you aware that you were asleep? Just for the sake of argument, suppose that you did not awaken; that during your sleep, you died. Would you have known about it? Of course not. Only those who may survive you will *know* that you have died. What of the fearsome lies in this? Joseph Fouché said: "Death is an eternal sleep." In sleep, we are unaware and how, in all reason, may we be frightened by anything of which we are unconscious? One disturbing thought may occur, as it did to Shakespeare:

For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,  
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
Must give us pause.

However, when we face death squarely, we reduce its threat to us and help to prevent the emergence of disturbing emotion. This, we have seen to be true for all of life's problems. A deliberate and realistic attitude toward death can help us to evolve a peaceful acceptance that the anxiety-bound soul never can know. Just as it is desirable to break any life habit (such as smoking or drinking) once and for all, so too is it desirable that the habit of life itself should be broken cleanly and sharply at death. When death arrives, how much better staunchly to say to life, "Farewell" than to murmur wishfully, "Au revoir." Stephen Crane, the author of *The Red Badge of Courage*, had this to say as death approached him: "When you come to the hedge that we must go over, it isn't bad. Just a little dreamy anxiety—which world you are really in—that is all."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> E. LeComte (ed.), *Dictionary of Last Words*, New York, Philadelphia Library, 1955.

E. B. in her middle eighties was a cheerful and vigorous lady. Throughout her life (and it had been a hard one, including some years in a sod hut in central Kansas), she had maintained a vibrant interest in life and in living. Although she was afflicted with an increasing deafness that hearing aids could not mitigate, she lost none of her optimism toward, and happiness in, life. Until the week of her last illness, she welcomed new experiences and knowledge and was actively interested in the things and events about her. To the moment that the merciful coma precedent to death encompassed her, she was youthful in act and attitude. Toward the end, as her children stood about the bed, she said: "I want no tears. You have done enough for me already, please do not grieve, I am content. I have had a good life; a full life, I have no regrets. Now, I am tired and I am ready." As she faced life, she died—smiling.

From youth to age-mate, her many friends and acquaintances agreed, "She was a wonderful woman." Could one ask for a finer epitaph, or more real immortality?

All of us should know, should recognize, and should accept the fact that the enemy of mankind is not death but is ignorance, with its twin allies, prejudice and dogmatism.

So live that when thy summons comes to join  
The innumerable caravan, which moves  
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take  
His chamber in the silent halls of death,  
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,  
Scourged to his dungeon, but, sustained and soothed  
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,  
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch  
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.

—BRYANT, *Thanatopsis*

### ENJOYMENT AND OLD AGE

We have room in both our actions and our attitudes for real and definite things we can do to avoid or reduce the common troubles of old age. Perhaps the most common of these difficulties centers about the table. In plain talk, we just eat too much. We should remember that as we enter late maturity, our bodily needs diminish (as a result of the general decrease in

vigor) and consequently, we need less fuel. When our appetites fall off as well, we are fortunate. All too frequently, this is not the case and we continue to consume as much food as ever we did. We remain highly efficient trenchermen more out of habit than because of bodily need. Too many of us dig our graves with our teeth—or their replacements.

Beyond this habit factor, we also may overeat just because it is one of the “few things we still can enjoy.” We find pleasure in the act of eating itself. This is likely to happen to the extent that we are sorrowful about ourselves and look back upon the things we can no longer do instead of looking ahead to find out what may be done. We can reduce this danger by seeing to it that our later life involves as many and as varied activities as we can accomplish. If we have opened up several areas of enjoyment for ourselves, there is less likelihood that we will hit upon any one as *the* way of life, and we will have enough things to do so that we are not bored. When we can find pleasure with others in cards, games, spectator sports (or sports themselves, as witness the “Over 75” ball team of St. Petersburg, Fla.), conversation, or hobbies, we are not so prone to use mealtimes as the only way of meeting and communing with others. Just as we never should bet our all on any one behavior pattern, so too the old person should not use food as an exclusive road to contentment.

### **ACCEPTING REALITY**

Our problem always is one of understanding and accepting reality. We should therefore know about the changes that occur in us as we age. As you become progressively older, you must expect that your vision will be less and less acute. Your hearing acuity will diminish, and you may be bothered by constipation and urinary problems. You can expect the whole general *tone* of your body to lower. In order of their frequency of occurrence, disabling physical conditions after age sixty-five arrange themselves as follows:

Degenerative diseases

Respiratory illness including pneumonia

Accidents  
Joint disorders  
Digestive disorders  
Nervous diseases  
Cancer

All told, these disabling conditions account for about 80 percent of all disability after sixty-five.<sup>12</sup>

In all of these, however, modern medicine markedly has reduced both the seriousness of the problems and the possibility of fatal outcome. Moreover, a careful program of physical hygiene and body care can be largely preventive in nature. If we take good care of our bodies throughout our lives, we will have a sturdier support for our old age. There is a distinct relationship between good health and intelligent living. We store up credits or debits for ourselves largely in terms of how we care for our bodies as a matter of practice. Possibly one of the greatest factors in opening our bodies to the onslaught of illness is the unnecessary wear and tear to which we subject them when we permit fancy rather than fact to control our behavior.

### **CHANGE OF LIFE**

Another factor of aging, that is of particular importance to the female, centers about that period we call change of life. This shift in body metabolism ordinarily occurs between age forty-four and forty-nine in the lives of women. Something akin to this change may take place in the male between the ages of fifty-five and sixty-five, although the reality of this in the lives of men seems to be a moot point. In any case, the climacteric (change of life) is a stage or a period that, like puberty, is to be accepted and one to which we must adapt. It should not be feared, it should be understood; we should not strive to reject it, but to incorporate its facts within our behavior. As you may expect, the whole process has been surrounded by myth and superstition.

<sup>12</sup> J. Gilbert, *Understanding Old Age*, New York, Ronald, 1952, especially Chapter 1.



In the first place, when we are reasonably well-adjusted, the climacteric presents no threat to us. Furthermore, if we have looked into the facts, we know that there is no *necessary* reduction in sex desire or enjoyment as we go through our change of life. Similarly, as normal people, we have not used physical attractiveness or sex as such as our sole way of obtaining acceptance and regard. We have been a whole person and consequently we experience no staggering sense of loss as our bodies change from the curves of youth to the lines of age. When we are well-adjusted, we remain a man or a woman regardless of our years.

Despite widespread belief to the contrary, women do not necessarily lose their sexual desire at menopause. In fact, it often is increased. Likewise with men, there ordinarily is no organic reason for impotence before age sixty. Furthermore, this is highly variable. Many men have enjoyed a quite vigorous sex life up to the end of a long and active earthly span. The conviction that sex behavior stops after the climacteric is a fiction bred by "old women" of both sexes. About the only certainty within the change of life is that if you have lived by any of the neurotic trends we have described, these trends will become intensified. It is most common to discover, when we humans show neurotic behavior during the climacteric, that we have utilized neurotic trends as ways of achieving our goals habitually throughout our lives. The climacteric, like any period of "stress," but highlights our typical reactions to life in general. We then behave just as we always have behaved, only we behave in those ways more so.

Clinical evidence shows clearly that there is no decline in the older person's interest in or desire for a sex life. However, both interest and desire can suffer strongly because of the myth of decline and the general taboo that envelops sex at any age. Consequently, such decline as may appear is more a reflection of a socialized expectancy than of any real reduction in bodily function or desire. Kinsey has shown clearly that there is no generalized reduction in sex interest or activity within either sex beyond the rather consistent falling off in activity after the peak reached in the teens. There are life enjoyments at any age

and they remain much the same. If we are to realize them in late maturity, we must be guided by the courage in Whitman's "grace, force and fascination" rather than by the cowardice in Hood's "withered, shaken, forsakenness."

The climacteric is just another change in life that we must greet with expectation and deal with intelligently. When our life attitude has been one of welcoming change, we will not be defeated by this one. Biologically, we may be as "old as our arteries," but psychologically, we are as old as our adaptiveness. So long as we can shift our point of view to line up with changing conditions, just so long are we young regardless of what the calendar may say. The purest symptom of agedness is rigidity—whether we are sixteen or sixty at the time we display it. When the possibility of change *frightens* you, *you are old*, whatever your years may be.

### CATHARTICS AND PILLS

We already have said that constipation is a reasonable probability for the aging person. We shall talk about this biological function because excretory processes often take on an undue importance for us as we age. Many of our older people, influenced largely by the emphasis put upon colonic activity by imaginative advertising copywriters, become convinced that constipation is a severe threat to good health. This is just not the case. A slow-acting colon and hard stools do not mean poor health nor do easy and regular bowel movements necessarily guarantee good health. If you are concerned about the state of your colon, the only intelligent thing to do is to see your physician and to follow his advice. The least intelligent thing you can do is to follow the suggestions of radio and television advertising. Think a moment. A common and insistent plea for a cathartic, urged upon all over thirty-five, is that when its trade name is spelled backwards "it spells Natures." Would it not be just as *logical* for the American Kennel Club to insist that every household should have a dog, thereby bringing godliness into it?

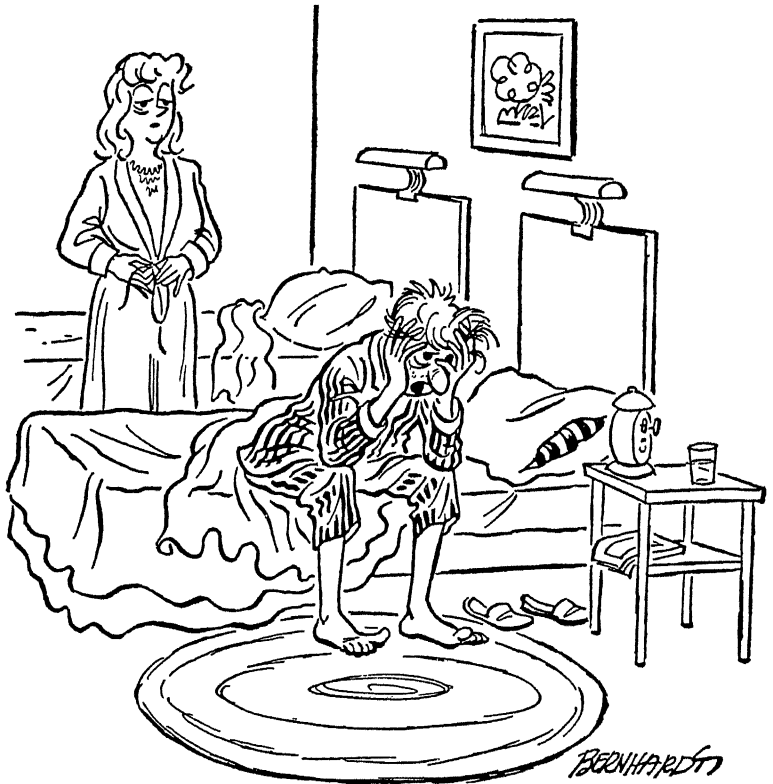
Actually, it is not constipation as such that we need to fear

but rather the "cathartic habit" that all too many of us develop. Driven by a concern abetted by the vendors of patent medicines, we often make nightly use of a commercial laxative. Why should we be surprised if after years of such dosing, our colon should become adapted to external assistance and therefore lose its normal tonicity? Through our cathartic habit, we remove any need for our colon to function by itself. In any case, colonic lethargy is distinctly the lesser of two evils age may bring; you should be much more concerned about lethargy in your cortex!

Old people often feel too tired to do anything. Furthermore, this generalized fatigue is not removed by rest, as normally is the case. When this occurs, the prescription is this: "See your physician to be certain that no illness or latent disability may be involved." This prescription is good whatever your age may be. If examination gives you a reasonably clean bill of health, then think about the relationships between undue emotionality and feelings of fatigue of which we have spoken so lengthily. Remember, undue fatigue commonly results from emotional conflicts. Look into yourself and get help if it seems indicated. The probability is strong that your tiredness results from your *feelings* of inability and is not the cause for them. Now remember that the most effective antidote for feelings of fatigue is *interesting work*. If this seems paradoxical to you, put it to the test; you are in for a delightful surprise. You will find it to be a fact that when time weighs heavily upon you, your back hurts. The cure for lethargy is found in purpose for living; in a life of *doing*, there is no room for boredom. When you are engaged in enjoyable activity that leads to feelings of achievement, you will have no time to indulge in introspection about your bodily processes. Remember, it is these self-induced internal examinations that produce worry and concern. In general, your body functions automatically and the less conscious interference you impose upon it, the better for you.

Another unnecessary concern for us as we age is our decreased need for sleep. As we get older, we tend to awaken earlier. Many of us, not recognizing that this but fulfills normal

expectancy, find the dread word "insomnia" haunting us. Because we have been told that every person needs at least eight hours of sound sleep if he is to stay healthy, we start scouting about to find ways of enforcing this amount of sleep upon ourselves. Sedatives are relatively easy to obtain and we get them. Once again, we begin to train our body to rely upon external crutches instead of its own good organismic sense. Unless your physician prescribes sedation, you are a fool if you



"I'm glad morning only comes once a day."

FIGURE 23. From *The Saturday Evening Post*. Reproduced by permission of the artist, Glenn R. Bernhardt.

use it. Furthermore, don't be deluded by "nonhabit-forming" claims. Physiologically, these claims well may be true in the sense that no bodily demands are created by the drug, but you quickly will form the habit of depending upon the drug to do a job that your own worry prevents your body from handling. So, look into yourself, not a bottle of pills.

For the moment, let us ignore the fact that as we age, we usually need less sleep. Let us stress the equal fact that insomnia commonly is the result of unrelieved emotional tension. Since insomnia grows out of irresolution, its cure certainly resides in satisfying days that end in a sense of accomplishment. This is the best prescription for a good night's sleep that can be given. Much too often, however, the day drags, we putter about, starting this, dropping that, worrying and fretting in our futile search for self-consolation. It would be strange indeed that, after a day like this, we should sleep at all. Actually, the night is spent largely with endless thoughts that circle about our self-pitying resentment. Be assured that *something to do* during the day will get you more rest at night than all of your supplication at the altars of Bromide and Barbiturate. These gods are to be classed with Baal; they are false and phoney. Remember, that you get from life exactly what you put into it. Life will return rest when it is earned by accomplishment; life will not willingly replace energy lost through sheer selfness.

As you well know, if you will but stop to think, the goad behind sedatives is the wish to escape from a dull existence. Sedation helps us to put an end to the day of futility and to postpone the appearance of another. In our efforts to escape a morass of our own making, we often drug ourselves into an unconscious attempt to conquer time. What fools we. Inexorable time is scarcely to be intimidated by our puny desires however pharmaceutically reinforced. All we achieve with our sedation is to *utilize* sleep as a means of denying to ourselves that our lives are wasted. Does it not seem strange that we, who fear death, deliberately should court so persistently death's little brother—sleep? In the Prologue to his poem, *The Earthly Paradise*, William Morris said:

Masters, I have to tell a tale of woe,  
A tale of folly and of wasted life,  
Hope against hope, and bitter dregs of life,  
Ending, where all things end, in death at last.

Death, *at last*, often cannot come too soon to us when we try to escape our responsibility to life, yet death will then come to us before it need.

### LOOKING AHEAD

When we get old, we tend to look backward too frequently and forward not often enough. When we fail to pace our own adjustment with life as it flows past us, there comes a time when we are strangers to it and become lost in its complexities. We then begin to wish for the things that were and to recall the past in idealized form. Unfortunately, we are a verbal people and our recollections of bygone days, coupled with our recriminations of the present, flow with an ease highly satisfying to ourselves and equally boring to our listeners. While old people may not talk too much, they tend to say too little. Twice-told tales should stop right there. Throughout our discussion of man and his problems, we have seen over and over again that most of his problems are self-induced, they are hand-tailored to fit his personal needs, and they are not to be solved by subservience to the status quo. At any time in life, the only effective attitude is a forward-looking one.

The practice of looking ahead in life permits us to anticipate and to prepare for the facts of later maturity. When we do this, old age is not a sudden catastrophe, but is a well-known and often welcome friend. Remember, the only really effective solution to the problems of life is found in realistic and competent preparation for them. By far, the majority of these problems are known and predictable. Furthermore, ways of meeting them squarely are available and all of us can find these if we are willing to look for them. Since all we need to do to become old is to stay alive long enough, we should plan for old age exactly as we would prepare for any event that we knew lay in our future.

When we accept the inevitability of old age and plan for its event, we are much less likely to attempt the battle of exceeding ourselves that so many fearful personalities wage. The fact that no one has even approached winning in this engagement seems not to deter us. Such persistence well could be more effectively directed. Old age becomes a prison, with time as its keeper, only in so far as our fear makes it so. Participation in a present alive with plans for the future is a maxim for happy living whether we are eighteen or eighty. If we stay alert to the present, we can find things to *do* now instead of researching our memories for things done. This practice also will enable us to avoid the horror of empty years. While we *may* not be able to prolong our lives a single second beyond *our* allotted span, we will experience the life we are permitted as useful and worth while. The only fullness in the life of the escapee from time is regretfulness.<sup>13</sup>

#### **DANGERS OF SELF-PITY**

All of us have experienced the older person whom we have greeted with: "How are you?" and have thereupon been immersed in a flood of complaints. After this experience, we have been careful to say only: "Hello." We who maintain an illness diary and open it at the slightest provocation have discovered the key to the loss of friends and the alienation of others. The point is that our bodies are better off forgotten and, in so far as our personal feelings are concerned, so too are we. If you must be interested in ill health, become curious about the illnesses and frailties of your friends. However, do not engage with them in a marathon of symptom recital. Your aches and pains may be most important to you but they are mighty dull listening for your acquaintances. After all, they may be equally as fascinated with their miseries as you are with yours.

The dangerous and vicious thing about this obsession with

<sup>13</sup> For what can be done and has been done, see: New York State Joint Legislative Committee on Problems of the Aging (Senator Thomas C. Desmond, Chairman), "New Jobs at 65," *Young at Any Age*, 1950, pp. 93 ff., and "Your Second Career," *No Time to Grow Old*, 1951, pp. 196 ff.

personal symptoms is that it becomes a roundabout way to yesterday. You just cannot dwell upon the miseries of arthritis or rheumatism without recalling the day when you "didn't have a pain in your body." The obvious and unavoidable next step is an unhappy comparison between the then and the now. Too frequently, this comparison ends up in a welter of self-pity and resentful regret. At this point, you begin your travel into the never-never land of "I wish I were," and your rut slowly begins to take on the dimension of a grave. You simply never can develop a healthy interest in the future so long as you are moaning about the present and looking backward wishfully into the past. Of you, Robert Burns wrote:

But how carve way i' the life that lies before,  
If bent on groaning for the past?

Many of the unhappy interests the old person shows in the past, in pain, in himself, in his bodily functions, in insistence upon respect for his years and his wisdom are but self-pity in fact and, in a real sense, are forced upon him by his feelings of uselessness. While the older person should do all that he can to prevent morbid self-centeredness from developing, much blame must fall upon a society that fosters the myth that as age increases, utility decreases. We already have described the *facts* to indicate that the older worker can be a distinct asset to industry. The success that handicrafts can have in restoring a feeling of worth-whileness to the aged is further proof that our usefulness ceases directly as we *expect* that it will. There is golden opportunity for the old in all the ways that man has found to use his hands. Physical disability becomes quite unimportant when the old person sets himself to a task that he wants to do. Whatever actual skill may be obtained is of small matter; the important thing is that the doing of something gets us outside of ourselves. And, so long as we can live outside of ourselves, so long are the odds favorable to us that our lives will be worth while.

Serious studies of the needs and abilities of the aged have been lacking until quite recently. At the present, however, growing emphasis upon these questions is everywhere ob-



served. This is precisely as it should be. We rapidly are becoming an older and older people and action certainly is indicated. We have done little in the past, perhaps because the study of old age involves facing, within the subject matter, our own future. However, the important thing is what is being done right now and what may be done in the future. The yeoman work of State Senator Thomas C. Desmond and his New York State Joint Legislative Committee on Problems of the Aging is to be commended most highly. Through this kind of mutual approach, real hope exists for a functional solution of the various issues.<sup>14</sup>

Facing fact squarely, we must admit that late maturity is *old age*, that the end of life is approaching, and that commonly we realize these things too late and are unprepared. As we become aware of the race almost run with many a youthful aspiration not yet achieved, feelings of pessimism are easy. Time, so superfluous in youth, now becomes the most precious of commodities. Regret for having wasted so much of it, however futile, serves nevertheless to reduce our feelings of worthwhileness. As we lose confidence in ourselves, pessimism emerges. Without faith in ourselves, it is most difficult to find faith in the future. This may be especially true when we know that the future is brief. However, whether we are young or old, we should heed Carlyle's warning: "The most fearful unbelief is unbelief in yourself."

### **INDIAN SUMMER**

Standing in opposition to the pessimism of old age is the fact that increased maturity is a very recent acquisition (life expectancy has doubled during the past one hundred years), and perhaps one of the greatest gifts science has bestowed upon us. With longer life span goes a responsibility that we should use the added years efficiently. When we are old, we therefore owe society a debt, even though this same society

<sup>14</sup> Publications of this Committee are: *Birthdays Don't Count*, 1947; *Never Too Old*, 1948; *Young at Any Age*, 1950; *No Time to Grow Old*, 1951; *Making the Years Count*, 1955.

mistreats us, for the additional years of life we have been given. However, we also should do our best to help society to recognize our ability to meet this obligation.

Old age brings golden opportunity to us when our lives have been adequate. Because of our experience, we are in a position to check things and events against the supreme standard: "That which makes for increased human effectiveness is good and that which makes for increased human ineffectiveness is bad." When we can get outside of ourselves and our little personal feelings, we can use a lifetime of experience to look back and from the perspective gained, do some projecting into the future. We, in our later years, *know* what has been helpful and what harmful if our vision stays clear. The potential in the accumulated experience of mankind literally is infinite. But, we can utilize it only when we look ahead.

When knowledge and experience have ripened into wisdom in the intellectually vigorous oldster, tremendous contribution to social betterment can be made. Potentially, there is the vastest of reservoirs here. Furthermore, old folks would give of it happily and find security and worth-whileness in the giving. There is hope in the fact that as human knowledge pushes forward the bounds of established human thought, the shadows of heights yet unscaled always fall across our path. Human knowledge probes an infinite space and the more that is known, the less seems to be understood. While this will frighten those who wish things were as they used to be, it is but a spur when we look ahead. Old age can be the Indian Summer of life if we humans will but let it. In a very real sense, the future lies not in the hands of the vibrant young, but in the wisdom of the active old.

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# 13. A REALISTIC OUTLOOK ON LIFE

Self-reverence, self-knowledge, self-control  
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.  
—Tennyson, *Cædmon*

YOU WILL RECALL THAT, THROUGHOUT OUR DISCUSSION, we have tried to show that our inner health is determined by the balance we can achieve between our personal desires and the external demands we face. So long as this balance is reasonably steady, all is well. When, however, we place undue emphasis upon either of these two forces, our plasticity is reduced and we become vulnerable to threat. When this happens, our resistance to stress is lowered and we are open to emotional invasion. Our adaptability is then sacrificed for the pseudosecurity of rigidity, and the vicious circle of neurosis engulfs us. As we also have seen, there is no escape from this until we undergo a retraining program to strengthen ourselves so that we once more can face our problems objectively.

We also have shown that many of our social beliefs tend to force us into rigid ways of behaving and therefore cause unhealthy development. Effective habits of living cannot develop in a vacuum. Consequently, there is a stern mandate for coöperation between home, school, and church; a coöperation guided and controlled by the *knowledge* of himself man has discovered. You and I, as individual persons and as members of social institutions, must face squarely the facts of man's basic make-up and then live in terms of these facts. We have no choice but to cast away as useless the wishful beliefs that too frequently haunt us into behavioral futility. We must accept the fact that effective living can be found only within a society that provides ample opportunity for feelings of usefulness, belongingness, and satisfaction that are combined in a free-

dom to express ourselves as *individuals*. To the extent that these opportunities are not present, just so are we ineffective and inefficient in our interpersonal relations. And, it is upon precisely these relations that social unity is built.<sup>1</sup>

Largely because of our insistence that man become that which he cannot, we have failed, to date, to develop a unitary and homogeneous culture. Much fault here must be laid to the home, the school, and the church that, following social myth, have trained its members in emotional immaturity and consequent insecurity feelings. If, however, the training of our youth were based soundly upon a realistic understanding of man's fundamental nature, generations to come would be more effective in meeting their problems. Out of this training in actuality, there could arise the satisfactions and securities within interpersonal relations that would permit for the emergence of a functional philosophy of life. It is, you see, only when we possess a *functional* (a realistically based and efficiently operative) philosophy of life that we are able freely to engage in an easy and open interchange of feelings and ideas with others. Furthermore, it is upon such easy interchange that wholesome social relationships are built. In this last chapter, we shall make it our task to see what can be done in order to structure a functional philosophy of life for ourselves.

### **FUNCTIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

None of us can hope to escape the pressures for or against effective personal adjustment that exists within our culture. We develop under these pressures and are largely molded by them. However, each of us can do something to make our lives more effective if we are willing to use the potential that is latent within our new brain. As we have said, culture itself is a consequence of the behaviors and the expectations of the *people* who compose it. It is, therefore, by no means impossible that a rational and realistic society could emerge out of co-

<sup>1</sup> E. Fromm, *The Sane Society*, New York, Rinehart, 1955; S. Hirsh, *The Fears Men Live By*, New York, Harper, 1955.

ordinated, individual efforts to become more adequate persons. While any individual person can do but little toward general social betterment, it is vitally important that each of us *do what we can*. Just as a single candle but flickers in the darkness, a thousand, lighted together, dispel gloom completely. We simply have to try; alternate hypotheses contain implications too awful to be considered. Defeatism leads not only into itself; it is contagious beyond belief. A little search will show you how commonly the individual cry; "*Suave qui peut!*"—has hastened the defeat of whole armies. If we say we are interested in mankind and that we have hope for his future, we have no choice but to cease to wish and to strive to think. We must forego beguiling myth and *work* to become sufficiently secure emotionally that we can face fact without fear. Even though we feel certain that we are indeed but voices crying in the wilderness, *cry* we must if we are to survive the catastrophe fearful wishfulness may bring to us.

Before we describe what you can do to build a foundation for more effective living, let us block out the general problem in broad outline. We define the effective life as one that:

1. Includes a job to do.
2. Has a plan for job accomplishment.
3. Possesses enough freedom to work the plan through.

### **EFFECTIVE LIVING**

So defined, effective living and the concepts of democracy show striking parallels. As a consequence, those social forces that direct us toward the ways of life that we term "democratic" also assist us toward effective personal adjustment. Similarly, whatever social forces impel us toward ways of living that are out of line with democratic principles also push us down the road to neurosis. Such social forces as are found within intolerance, whether racial, religious, economic, or whatnot in nature, serve only to increase the emotional tension under which we must live. As these tensions increase, so too do the hazards to good adjustment. Furthermore, the values of democratic living also are reduced to a like extent. The prin-

cipal function of a democracy is to maintain effective adjustment patterns within its members. Likewise, individual effectiveness in interpersonal relations augment the potential within the democratic way of life.

The emotional states that work against both the personally effective and the democratic ways of living have been described. For purposes of review, let us survey these in the list that follows.

1. Anxiety
2. Compulsive needs for love (such as appreciation, approval)
3. Hostility
4. Inferiority feelings
5. Guilt
6. Ambivalence (indecision)
7. Ambition (competition)
8. Envy<sup>2</sup>

These are the most untender of traps and are snares that we can avoid only when we can see beyond our personal desires into the world of factual reality. When we labor under the burden of any of these, our adjustment becomes proportionately ineffective and we are hindrances rather than helps to the democratic process.

Remember, that the life attitudes each of us carry about are functions of the kind of early training we have received. As adults, therefore, you and I may need to engage in searching and laborious soul probing when we seek to discover why we feel as we do about certain aspects of social living. While we may not be able to do the complete job in the absence of psychological assistance, our very recognition of the fact that a search should be made will sensitize us to the implications of the problem upon which our attitude bears. Possibly, an illustration will be helpful. Suppose you become aware that there are certain ideas, persons, concepts, or beliefs that "you can-

<sup>2</sup> O. English, The nature of the emotional states that disturb bodily function, *Penna. Med. J.*, 1949, 52. pp. 689-691; also see: The nerves of the nation—psychiatry eyes the breaking point, *News Week*, 1956, March 5, pp. 54-58.

not stand." These, then, are the things of which you are intolerant. Just the fact of being aware of the intolerance itself will assist you in compensating for it. This means that when you encounter one of these "intolerable" situations, you now have the chance of reacting to it with less *immediacy* than has characterized your reactions heretofore. You now, because you know that you tend to be quick, can make yourself slow down, you can insert that period of delay your new brain makes possible, you can apply the braking effects of reason. In this process, a self-directed question of "why" almost is inevitable. You will find yourself wondering how it is that you *feel* this way. If you are careful to beware intriguing alibi, you have an opportunity for greater self-understanding. You may not achieve final and conclusive answers, but you cannot very well avoid a certain amount of growth.

### SOUL-SEARCHING

If you possess intolerance feelings and you make any reasonably honest effort to look behind them, you will discover a generalized tendency toward hostility. If you are intolerant, you also *hate*. How deeply you hate will be revealed by the degree of your intolerance. The more quickly you get mad at the intolerable situation, the more strongly you hate it—and the more you are really *afraid* of it. Some interesting, although quite unflattering, aspects of yourself may be uncovered as you introspect deeper and deeper. Remember, as long as you cannot tolerate, you are a bad neighbor.

Generalized hatred (to call things by their right names rather than to use the more pleasant term "hostility") arises out of our early training and restricts our personality by reducing the scope of our thought and imagination. Such words as "narrow," "bigoted," and "intolerant" describe the rigidity of behavior that is a consequence of fearful insecurity. What this means can be said by: "I'm *not* afraid of this and I'll prove it by my attack!" In the process, we fool our associates and, unfortunately for us, we also fool ourselves. You see, it is a practical certainty that an objective survey of intolerance



feelings will reveal underlying and pervasive *fear*; deep fear of a threat to our own personal security. When, therefore, you cannot abide something, whether it be person or concept, look for the fear-for-self that underlies your distaste.

Look honestly into yourself. Do you tend to be flexible or rigid? Here are some aids to you in your soul-searching.

FLEXIBILITY

Willingness to take a chance.  
Willingness to support conviction.  
Willingness to accept a reasonably well-done job as finished.  
Recognition that "probability" rules our lives.  
Willingness to face and accept facts.  
Remembering the pleasant and cheerful experiences in life.

RIGIDITY

Conviction that only the worst will ensue.  
"It isn't worth the effort."  
Difficulty in releasing a task until it is "perfect."  
Frantic search for "certainty."  
Refusal to accept fact; wishes "things were different."  
Remembering the unpleasant and morbid experiences.

On which side do you fall?

You already have been shown that human biology has not kept pace with human technology. This fact alone would make things difficult enough for us. However, in sound human fashion, we have not been content with this. Therefore, we have added abundantly to our problems through the framework of wish and myth that we have constructed. This framework is made of the socially imposed attitudes and beliefs that also have lagged far behind knowledge as we have accumulated it. Despite the fact that this accumulation of knowledge has made radical changes in our material ways of living, our behavior is still directed by standards that, although admirably devised for maintaining security feelings generations ago, are now of little effectiveness. Many of us yet insist upon a sovereignty, both personal and national, as a basic "right," without recognizing that effective relations (interpersonal or international) can be attained only when this sovereignty is subordinated to a greater welfare. Only when we can forego the appeal of the

"I" for a greater emphasis upon the "You," can we begin to base our behavior upon the *facts* that exist. Furthermore, we grow or we die, and our efforts to turn time back results only in the futility of fear of, and fulmination against, the things that *are*. We must learn to understand and to accept more and therefore to fear less. If we cannot live by bread alone, how much more undernourished may we become on a diet of fear and hate?

### DEVELOPMENT OF FAITH

What we need, more than a balanced budget or a stable economy, is a working faith that embraces mankind, his culture, and that will give us a purpose and meaning in our lives. This faith, and perhaps this faith alone, will balance and stabilize *us*. Such a faith, instead of condemning those who differ with us, would seek to understand them and to support mutual confidence. This would be a "faith that casts out fear" indeed. It must be our conviction, by which we live and to which we lend active support, that only through reasonable and verifiable understanding of man and his nature may come the "living togetherness" that is essential to the effective home, culture, or nation. Unless we know and accept ourselves for *what we are*, we cannot have any deep-down belief in ourselves. In the absence of this internal conviction of ability and worth, we are haunted by a sense of futility and driven restlessly toward the morass of fruitless wish. A faith built on knowledge, rather than wish, can serve as a keystone maintaining by its own pressure the strength and uprightness of the structure it completes. We must recognize and accept the fact that everything, even concepts, wears with age, and, as things wear, they become progressively weaker. Furthermore, it is impossible to patch without in some measure changing the original structure. In the light of this, the blind willfulness of those who would maintain tradition *as such* becomes wholly apparent.

Basic to the development of a faith in man founded upon the knowledge he has accumulated is the assumption that man possesses, at least in latent form, the kindness, humility, and interest in others that is required for you-oriented living. While

we have seen that man, by nature, is an ego-centered creature, we also have seen that this basic ego-centeredness gets imposed upon it such habits of living as man has been trained to develop. Consequently, it should be obvious that man can learn to become the kind of being tradition has assumed him naturally to be. The principle now becomes: *Man can be, through a process of intelligent training, the kind of person we would like him to become.* Remember, knowledge and freedom, whether of person or culture, go hand in hand.

If, however, this training program is to be effective, we must recognize that we do not learn how to become you-oriented merely through the process of staying alive nor yet through sheer "exposure" to desirable patterns of living. If we are to learn effectively, we must actively be trained in the skill to be learned and we must be permitted to make our own mistakes in the process. In a sense, we humans learn what to do by discovering what not to do. This social training, aimed at realizing the potential we all carry about, must be as active and as persistent a course as the apprentice goes through as he learns the skills of his craft. Furthermore, the training program must be preceded by a planning equal in efficiency and thoroughness to that preceding any industrial apprenticeship program. This takes thought, effort, and an honest answer to the question: "Training for *what?*"

This, then, is our credo; our conviction based in faith. Man's potential amply justifies our faith in his ability to live effectively and actually to become the kind of *human being* he long has said that he was. It is true that as of the moment, we humans have prevented adequate expression of this potential because of our tradition-bound attitudes and our smug satisfaction with ourselves. If we are to live as effectively as our latent potential could make possible, we must work to escape the limits of sheer selfness and forget our ancient delusion that, by nature, we are "man the wise." In this effort, a realistically based philosophy of life (and therefore, a philosophy of life that has a chance of *working*) is an essential first step. Only through the perspective that such a life philosophy offers, may we triumph over ourselves and resist the tyranny of tradition.

Let us not question the "selfness" that lurks within us all. Remember the fears of our college students and how completely they centered about sheerly personal needs? A national survey of the worries of the American public showed that an overwhelming majority of the people polled answered the question: "What kinds of things worry you most?" with a reply that was based *solely in terms of personal feeling*.<sup>3</sup>

A University had been given a certain amount of money that was to be applied to faculty salaries. In a subsequent faculty meeting, the question arose concerning how this money should be allocated. In brief, this discussion broke down into two options.

1. All faculty members would get a straight 10% increase.
2. The funds would be pro-rated in terms of need with Instructors and Assistant Professors receiving a 20% boost, Associate Professors to be increased 15% while Professors (Department Heads) would receive 5%.

There was considerable talk about this. All present *knew* that things were tough for the lower paid members and that many of them were borrowing, cashing in life insurance policies, etc., just to stay even with their living expenses. In general, it was the older group with heavy seniority (Professors) who argued for the straight 10% increase. This, of course, meant more to *them*. They were as full of rationalizations as any child caught in a misdemeanor. Unfortunately, since voting was by show of hands, their alibis carried a great deal of weight. In any event, when the final vote was taken, the count indicated 52 hands for the straight 10% increase and 7 for the pro-rated deal. The obvious conclusion, even with members of our most intellectual population, would seem to be: "*Me*, seven to one!"

All of us must continuously be on guard against our basic selfness lest it creep through into our actions and force us to *behave* in ways we *say* man should not.

### **LIFE GOALS**

An effective philosophy of life must be as modern as the times, as up-to-date as current knowledge permits, and flexible enough so that it can be reworked as additional information

<sup>3</sup> S. Stouffer, What are we worried about? *Look*, March 22, 1955, pp. 25-27.

may demand. To be realistic, the philosophy must avoid the abstract and the metaphysical because *this* philosophy has work to do and accomplishment is difficult within verbal vacuums. Therefore, a working outlook on life must be as *real* to us as the things and events of life that we experience day by day. We have to base our framework for effective living upon the known *facts* of human existence and flights into fantasy, however appealing to desire or deeply embedded in authority, must be relegated to limbo. We shall want to *know*, to know about that with which we may achieve, since life goals are to be attained. And, if we think but a moment, all of us realize that life goals are reached by active effort and not by wishing them present. In this effort in action, your success will be a function of:

1. Your faith in yourself
2. Your faith in your fellow man
3. Your faith in the potential within your new brain.

Of all of these, the most harassing is the lack of faith in yourself. In the main, this fear springs from our refusal to accept ourselves as emotional creatures and from our insistence that we, by nature, are rational beings. In order to achieve the self-realization that is basic to an effective personal credo of life, you must think through an overall plan for reaching the goals you have set for yourself. In doing this, pay close account to the factors we have described within the main problems of life. If, throughout your "thinking through," you are realistic, objective, factual, and are careful to distinguish closely between fantasy and actuality, you have a chance of emerging with a *philosophy for living* that will *work* for *you*. You will have a sound foundation for the way you live. Be thoughtful. Remember that daydreaming is fantasy and results in behavior patterns we call by such terms as aimless, drifting, and inconsistent. A personally effective philosophy for living emerges only out of objective understanding, realistic self-acceptance, and knowledge of your relationship to the world of people and things.

## CARNIVAL

By Dick Turner



**"Seeing you in church this morning, Higgins, I thought  
for a startled moment I'd let Easter slip up on  
me unnoticed!"**

FIGURE 24. Reproduced by permission of NEA Service, Inc., and the Cleveland Press.

Such a philosophy for living can be developed by each of us and we need not go beyond the known facts of human behavior to construct it. There is ample knowledge available to permit us to base our life behavior upon a factually determined foundation without recourse to myth or superstition. In fact, we already have seen that a successful adjustment to the Ultimate can be obtained without doing violence to this postulate.

Let us exorcise another ghost. It is unfortunate that so many so-called "philosophies of life" should begin with a series of injunctions: "You should," "You ought," "You must." These may not be so bad in themselves but the dismal thing is that commonly, they are but a verbal set of precepts that really apply only in an ideal world and bear little resemblance to our actual behaviors. All of us know what "should" be done and we can pronounce the rules with considerable glibness. However, relatively few of us ever incorporate such mandates into our behavior. We agree that we "should do these things," but somehow we never quite get around to doing them. Therefore, very few of us have a functional philosophy of living that is basic to our everyday behavior. We are much more likely to reserve our code of ethics for Sunday.

The hard facts are that only when our code of values guides and directs our general behavior can we lay claim to a life philosophy in any realistic sense. Let's get this straight. Unless you are willing to *live* in terms of the code in which you believe, you have no real technique for living, however loudly you may talk about rules, either golden or base.

In a public address, the president of a small denominational college said that world unity and understanding would be attained only when no man was barred from participation because of his color or the religion of his choice. Yet this same president, in private discussion, refused to consider an applicant for an instructorship in his institution because the applicant was of the Jewish faith. The president's comment was to this effect: "Yes, I realize that the man is well-prepared and that he would, in all probability, do a good job. But, we don't want to consider him because of his religion." The

president's "philosophy of life" obviously was for propaganda purposes only. Words, in the absence of verifying action, are the tools of hypocrisy, and the lazy person's way of rationalizing his lack of courage to make things the way he says they are.

One of the reasons why we humans fail to develop a functional philosophy of life is that we assume that the "learning" of codes of conduct automatically guarantees that they will become actual guides for our behavior. The fact is that if any philosophical superstition has been thoroughly exploded, it is the ancient (yet still revered by our professional educators) belief that concepts, ideas, and rules automatically "transfer" from one life situation to another in the absence of any active effort on our part. The only things that get transferred are those that we make to transfer. The sheer memorizing of rules, whether they be in Latin, Mathematics, or Ethics perhaps may train our memory but just plain do not "train" our minds. The idea that concepts developed under one set of conditions automatically will become effective in any or all others is as untruthful and as short-sighted as the belief that the earth is the center of the universe.

However, things learned in one situation may be made to transfer to others if their general application is *actively taught* at the time of the original learning. In any training program, when we are shown how this or that rule applies in situations other than the one in demonstration at the moment, we then may be able to *see for ourselves* how the rule operates under conditions-in-general. If we are not so *shown*, the likelihood of our discovering these broader relationships for ourselves becomes quite remote.

### **ETHICAL CODES**

This fact is critical for our development of a functional life philosophy. It means that if ethical codes are to be at all effective in our lives, these codes must not only be learned, we must also be *shown* how and where they *apply*. When we memorize material, to whatever point of perfection, we have the job but half done. If this material is to be of any use to us,



we must see for ourselves how we can use it. In our own seeing of this, there is no better technique than illustrative example. Pertinent to our point here is the stern maxim of those who were engaged in Job Instruction Training during the last war: "If the learner hasn't learned, the teacher hasn't taught!"

Alongside the blithe assumption that talk and acts are synonymous, the individual codes we generally develop often grow haphazardly under the frequently inconsistent influences of the home, the school, and the church. In point of fact, most of us had but little to do with our acceptance of such codes as we hold. Too frequently, these codes for behavior are but scrambled collections of prejudice, distorted data, and blind ambition that usually are obtained second-hand in quite uncritical fashion. If our personal code is to be at all effective, it must be *our own*. It must grow out of our own thinking and experience rather than being a set of beliefs that has been handed to us. As a person, you can do everything that needs to be done in order to build your individual code. In fact, you have to do it yourself if maximum benefit is your aim. If you look for hand-me-downs only, you are quite likely to wind up with a very poor fit. Some hundreds of years ago (when many of our current ethical beliefs emerged), social institutions and concepts were rather firmly established, change was slow indeed, and it was relatively simple to live in terms of the codes into which we were born. This is no longer true. Now, change is rapid; almost frighteningly so. We are in transition continuously; we can only be reasonably certain that tomorrow is going to be quite different than today. Consequently, more than ever before, we must decide things for ourselves, lest the twentieth-century whirlpool engulf us as we cling to a seventeenth-century craft.

No one should attempt to impose a way of life upon any of us; each of us has both a duty and a right to evolve his own. However, certain elements may be considered as essential if we want our lives to be effective and realistic. These fundamentals can be phrased as questions you can ask yourself: "What do I want from life?" "What are the things and expectations in life that I am living for?" "What am I willing to

strive for despite failure and discouragement?" "If my life is worth living, what makes it so?" "What, in life, is really important?" "What *are* my goals, my ideals, my values; in what do I really believe?" Your answer to these questions will be the least common denominator of your philosophy of life. If you cannot answer them, you are living only in the present with no harbor in view and the shoals of regret dead ahead. So, if you have no answers, now is the time to begin to look for some; now is the time to get *direction* into your life. Be careful, however, of the answers that *may* occur. Keep well in mind that *purely in terms of orienting function* (aspirations and values), one life philosophy is as "good" as another. Consequently, if your answers revolve about your ego satisfactions, or about a ruthless self-ascendancy, or about sheerly personal power, position, and prerogative, you have, in a very real sense, a personal code that gives direction to your life. *However*, we intend as a basic principle that a desirable philosophy of life will serve as an integrating bond between your own motives and the demands of your culture. A *functional philosophy of life* must include not only your own needs but also those of your fellow man.

First of all, if your personal code is to justify itself as a philosophy of living, it must assist you to:

1. Maintain sound health.
2. Develop integrity.
3. Set goals and work toward them consistently.
4. Make effective judgments.
5. Appraise reality.
6. Build sincerity, humility, courtesy, and wisdom.

A code that will help you to approximate (you cannot hope fully and completely to attain them) these standards will be a functional one indeed. Basing our approach upon what is *known*, let us see what the raw materials may be.

Wide-eyed innocence may be appropriate to the child, but it hardly befits the adult. It will be well, therefore, to keep in mind that behavior does not occur in purposeless fashion, that all behavior is motivated—there is a reason for what we do.

The intelligent approach then becomes one of looking beneath surface behavior into the underlying motivation. You must expect that all motives will not be equally apparent; nor yet equally Christian. This does not mean at all that you therefore should go through life with your eyebrow raised in cynicism; it means only that you should try to *understand* man and his nature. When we are not aware of the devices man uses to obtain his ends, this is not innocence but ignorance and only opens us up to the blandishments of the socialized sharpshooter. Knowledge is the great antidote for worry and the archenemy of prejudice.

### **SUGGESTIBILITY, A THREAT**

Perhaps the most serious threat to realistic living is our own suggestibility. That we are suggestible has been demonstrated over and over again. If further evidence is needed, let us look into the field of advertising. You surely cannot doubt that advertising "works"; that it *sells* the products it promotes. Whether or not you approve is quite beside the point; the fact is that we are, by our very natures, wide-open to old-brain appeals. When, therefore, you say: "But, we *shouldn't* be this way!" you only confuse an ideal with a fact and are likely to become angry at a process you should try to understand. In a recent attempt to align advertising techniques with the principles of social science, that appears under the delightfully descriptive title of *The Engineering of Consent*, we find the flat statement: "Wishful thinking and simple hopefulness influence the actions of human beings far more than rational intelligence. Effective advertising is therefore based upon emotion and not upon intelligence."<sup>4</sup>

Advertising *works*. It represents perhaps the most effective utilization of new-brain potential to appeal to old-brain desire that man has yet devised. Prestige suggestion is tremendously influential in determining human opinion. We just

<sup>4</sup> E. Bernays (ed.), *The Engineering of Consent*, Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1955, p. 97. (Quoted from K. Menninger, and J. Menninger, *Love Against Hate*, New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1942.)

cannot question the role that suggestion plays in our everyday lives. We are literally suckers for "fast talk." If human nature primarily is emotionally based, we would expect this to be true. If, however, human nature were rationally based, this should not be so. As we have seen, however, the rationality of mankind is a potential that we possess; it is not a "natural" attribute that automatically expresses itself in our behavior.

It becomes important, therefore, that we should consider our decisions in terms of the extent to which they may be influenced by pressures induced by suggestion. If you wish to do so, examine almost any decision you have made in the light that later experience has shed upon it. The perspective that you achieve, however retrospectively obtained, may be quite unpleasant, even frightening. It is not at all uncommon for us to discover that, actually, *we* had relatively little to do with it. Yet, we *can* have much to do with the decisions we make and, if we hope for effective living, we should. Realistic living demands that we carefully examine the *facts* involved when we are in process of deciding about a course of action. When we do this, we have a chance of basing our final judgment upon fact rather than upon second-hand fancy. In general, whenever we do a thing only to wonder at a later date *why* we did it, we can be assured that our judgment fell prey to suggestion. Our affinity for suggestion can quite readily be understood. We have only to recognize that the suggestion techniques devised by the entrepreneur in human nature are *calculated* to play upon and to reinforce our natural tendency to follow momentary impulse and to live primarily by the immediate needs of the present. The skilled "Consent Engineer" is highly proficient in getting us to "do it now."

Realistic living also asks that we accept life as it is. When we do this, we recognize that both good and evil flourish in the world. We also recognize that the growth of either largely is dependent upon what we humans *do*. When we try to ignore the existence of evil (such as, ignorance, injustice, discrimination, disease) in this world of ours, we only try also to bury our heads in the sands of complacency. In the process, we promise

only that the evil we ignore shall continue. No fact will disappear just because you and I refuse to look at it. We should look at it closely, examine it, and understand it, because just so long as injustice exists, *you* are threatened; so long as disease prevails, *you* are in danger; so long as we discriminate one against the other, *you* may get left out; so long as ignorance is present, *you* may face the charge of "heresy." All of us live with all of life, and we must understand both the good and the evil that is in it.

You can, of course, follow the lead of Pangloss and chatter about living in "the best of all possible worlds," or you can follow Pollyanna and insist that "everything happens for the best." In fact, you can sell yourself on any empty phrase that suits your fancy or that serves to maintain your complacency about things. Unfortunately, neither your pronouncements nor your wishes will make things as you claim them to be. However, you will be most successful in fooling yourself.

Rationality insists that we recognize the existence of both right and wrong, but at the same time, it delivers the mandate to us that we also recognize that we can *do* something to correct the evil if only we will. Any such attempt at correction, however, implies that we are willing to *live* under the guidance of principles broader than those that emerge only from our own motives and desires. As we have seen, we become genuinely adequate *only* when we escape the restrictions of the "self." We must live our lives in compromise between our drives for selfness and the demands of others.

### **PHILOSOPHY OF LIVING**

*Courage, Inc.*, can show us the way. This organization was started by Dr. Camille Cayley, who in middle life, became paralyzed from the neck down as the result of a fall. As she was recuperating, she began to wonder what others did who found themselves in similar predicaments. Investigation showed her that there was little available for them beyond straight professional help. On the assumption that one person who has mastered a problem can be of best assistance to an-

other who is facing it, she moved in. The organization she founded now has some 250 members, all of whom are devoted to the assistance of other handicapped people. This group proves that while the degree of disability certainly is important, the *attitude* of the disabled person is vital.<sup>5</sup>

A realistic outlook implies the understanding and acceptance of the fact that there is both good and evil in life; that there are forces that stultify as well as forces that work toward growth. Realistic living means to face life squarely, avoiding no issues, and trying to recognize and accept the facts as they are. There is no room for either a blind optimism or yet a curdled pessimism. Just as realistic behavior is flexible behavior, so too a functional philosophy of living embodies the willingness to accept *change*; to accept the fact that life always is in a process of *becoming*. Furthermore, when we try to live realistically, we accept personal responsibility for whatever happens to us. We must recognize that whatever the end-results of our own process of becoming may be, we, ourselves, are in some measure responsible. Therefore, there is no place in our credo for the defeatism so often expressed by: "Things have always been this way." We know that "things" have not always been the way they are; that if these "things" have been as they are for a very long time, it is only because we humans have permitted this to be so. We feel a direct and personal responsibility for the way "things" are, and we are not content to leave them be if these "things" impede growth either social or personal. We are well aware of the reality in Donne's lines: "Therefore do not ask for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee."

When we live realistically, we recognize that we owe obligation to the society that has permitted us to live within it. We know that were it not for the protection that our culture has offered us, we would not have survived very long. Toward meeting this obligation, we must strive to leave society a little more effective than it was when we entered it. If we are to achieve this, we must by our own example, indicate that there are ways of growing more effectively. Toward this end, we accept ourselves as we are. We do not try to deny feelings

<sup>5</sup> Courage, Inc., *Time*, February 1956, p. 103.

of hostility, envy, and selfishness, but we are aware that they exist, even in ourselves, and we try to prevent them from influencing our behavior unduly. We avoid the common trap by which we humans can convince ourselves that *our* lives are so full of sweetness, generosity, and kindness that there is no room left for meanness and hatred. We do not “kid” ourselves, because we know how high is the price we must pay when we attempt to repress negative feelings by denying their existence. Efforts to bury undesirable feelings only strengthens their force, only adds to their insistence, and but assures that they will increasingly affect our daily attitudes and actions.

A young man came to college convinced of his “calling” for the ministry. He had been raised by a brutal father and a meek and subdued mother who, with the children, lived in continuous fear of the father’s outbursts of anger. Throughout the life of the youth, he could not recall a single instance in which he had been praised for work well done, but the times of punishment for failures were vivid in his memory. As a child, he had struck back with all the power at his command. He had played truant, deliberately failed in classes, stayed out late at night, lied, and cheated in futile attempts to escape from the tyranny of his father. During his junior year in college, he obtained a small country church and, at the beginning, enjoyed preaching tremendously. As time went by, however, he became increasingly dissatisfied without, he felt, any reason because, after all, was he not now doing just what he wanted to? Ultimately, he came for help. A series of interviews revealed that his “call” was a direct attempt to strike at his father who, as a Catholic, was infuriated that his son would enter the Protestant ministry. As the bases for his vocational choice became clear to the youth, he changed to a social studies major. Shortly after the clarification of his outlook on life and the redirection of his vocational aims, a serious spelling difficulty of long standing began to disappear. Interviews also had uncovered that, in grade school, low marks for misspelled words were a certain means of evening scores with the father.

In our structuring of a philosophy of living, it is imperative that we become willing to admit and to accept the selfish and the mean aspects of ourselves. When we deny these, we also deny a billion years of biological development. Feelings like these must be accepted as *natural* to us, and we must recognize

that we have to *learn* how to keep them out of our behavior. Effective living insists that these feelings be accepted and that they also be permitted *some* opportunity to function. Since complete denial only adds to their intensity, some kind of a safety valve must be installed.

Consequently, when they are recognized and accepted as part of us, the evidence indicates that they lose their force and insistence; they are not now important factors in our life economy. Realism in living demands that we accept ourselves in full; we accept the undesirable as well as the desirable. It helps when we know that the recognition and acceptance of faults tend to obliterate them. Carlyle tells us: "The greatest of faults is to be conscious of none."

As example, when you are "mad enough to spit," go ahead —*spit!* Then, having spat, sit down in close consultation with yourself and look into the cause for your anger. The probabilities are you will find that one of your personal sensitivities have been scratched; that one of your prideful "toes" has been stepped on. Many times, this kind of recognition alone is enough to reduce the irritating situation to its true proportions and thus to permit our sense of humor to come to our rescue.

### **OBJECTIVE PERSPECTIVE**

If, however, your self-consultation makes you but the angrier, then *do* something. Talk the situation over with those others involved or, if this is too difficult, talk it over with a "neutral" person. Try to see the situation from such a person's point of view, and permit his calmer intelligence to survey the issue. When you do this, you have a chance to obtain an objective perspective upon the situation and yourself, and a chance to see all factors in their true relationships. Any opportunity to see *your* situation through the eyes of a reasonably disinterested person is a desirable and thought-provoking experience. It will assist you to understand the true role that you should play and will also give you a look at yourself through the eyes of others. If you wish for a realistic glance at your actual position within your interpersonal relations, nothing can be of greater assistance.



Talking over our personal problems with the other fellow is possibly the most efficient technique we can apply toward achieving a realistic life. First of all, we are much too close to our own problems to see them clearly but quite close enough to describe them accurately if we permit ourselves opportunity to talk. Second, when we discuss the things that bother us, we find that just talking about them eases the pressure. This is particularly true when we have confidence in the person with whom we talk. Third, we obtain experience in ways of orienting our lives toward the needs of others, and this orientation is invaluable if we really want to *live* with our fellow men.

When we discuss our worries with another person, we commonly discover that our special concerns are "special" only to us. We find that the troubles we have are the same troubles man always has had, and that concern descends impartially upon mankind. When we discover that our problems are being *shared*, we are much less likely to wallow in the self-pity of: "Why must this happen to *me*?" Discovering that mankind tends to suffer together brings us closer in a harmony of mutual understanding; closer to ourselves, and closer to our neighbors.

Our own past experience teaches us that while a particular hardship loomed enormous while we were experiencing it, this hardship appears smaller and smaller as we look back upon it through an increasing depth of time. The discussing of these things, even when they appear insurmountable, permits us to regard them in a kind of retrospect because, since we all are brothers in suffering, we can see how someone else met a similar difficulty and what he did to resolve it. We thereby are enabled to bring the future into the present and, by telescoping time, to perceive our problem in a manner akin to the way we actually will regard it later in our life. Furthermore, we gain insight into "human nature."

If, after all this, we remain disturbed, we then should work it off. We can go for a walk, chop up a golf course, swim, dance, play any active game, punch a bag, or whatever. In fact, when we engage in any form of physical activity, we get our blood circulating and can "sweat out" the tensions our emotions have built up. Remember that emotions are *prepara-*

tion for bodily action. Consequently, when we engage in such action, we are meeting a biological demand with a biological answer. Can anything make *more* sense?

The option is not pleasant. When we permit emotional tension to exist unresolved, it feeds upon itself. So, when we sit and sulk, we only initiate the rotation of an emotional carousel, and we spin with increasing speed, however dignified we may *appear*. Once this merry-go-round has begun, the time comes when reality blurs and dizziness itself will prevent us from doing anything at all constructive. At this point, we begin to grasp for psychosomatic straws.<sup>6</sup>

Over and over again, we have said that we humans find effectiveness in living through our willingness to "go along" with others. Basically, this willingness involves the accepting of others as we would like to be accepted. This is but the "Golden Rule." However, when we say that if we were to apply this rule to our everyday living, most of our problems would be solved, we but mouth a phrase unless we also are told *how* to put the rule into effect.

### EGO-IDEALS

Remember our discussion of the "ego-ideal?" This refers to the self as we regard it. Each of us sees our "self" largely in terms of what our culture has defined as desirable, and our ego-ideal commonly may be described by words like "kind," "honest," "generous," "considerate," "humble." Too often, we see ourselves like this, but we see others much more "realistically." We see ourselves as we feel ourselves to be, while seeing others as their behavior indicates they are. Therefore, if we wish to apply the Golden Rule in our life behavior, it is imperative that we keep in mind the fact that other people also have ego-ideals that may fit them even less well than our own. It will help us also to suspect that the other person will feel that we are what our behavior indicates us to be. The other fellow is no more aware of your ego-ideal than you may be of

<sup>6</sup> Helpful suggestions, simply presented, may be found in: Whoa, take it easy! You'll do better, live longer, *Changing Times*, August 1955, p. 7.

his *unless* the self you fancy and your behavior are in close alignment. This latter possibility, close alignment, is quite rare. So, unless we are among the unusual, the suspicion is strong that our ego-ideal and our ego-in-action do not fit together too well.

The principle therefore becomes—assuming that we genuinely are interested in realistic living—*treat the other fellow as though he were the kind of person you fancy yourself to be*. When we behave as though our associates were the kind of people we see ourselves as being, we treat them as though this were true and we therefore have maximum chance of receiving this same kind of treatment in return. Remember, “what people believe to be true *is* true for them where their behavior is concerned.” Therefore, if you *believe* that man is good, kind, and honest, you will treat people in general as good, kind, and honest persons. Over the long pull, this will pay off for you; in interpersonal relations you indeed reap what you sow. Of course, you may expect deviations from your life rule. You *will* encounter the thief, the cheat, the chiseler, and the phoney but, in the by and in the large, this optimistic attitude and its consequent optimistic behavior will bring you returns far exceeding those you may obtain by being clever.

A contractor who constructs buildings, from million-dollar hospitals to small homes, goes on the assumption that mankind is honest and that the human word is a human bond. Despite the cynic’s immediate expectation that this contractor rapidly became bankrupt, people wait for him to build for them rather than contracting with someone else who could erect their home much sooner. It is custom with this builder whenever, through oversight, an item has been omitted from the specifications, to include it in the actual construction without the “usual” extra charge. Furthermore, inspectors report that his buildings are the only ones now being constructed in which no “short cuts” have been taken and in which all specifications have been met to the letter. The contractor states his credo as follows: “I believe that people are honest and that they will keep their word. When I say I’ll do a thing, I do it, and no contract is necessary—I just assume that the other fellow will do the same. Although sometimes I’ve had to wait for my money, I’ve never lost a cent. Until I do, I’ll just have faith in man.”

It takes strength to trust, but deep within such trust lies the fact that others cherish themselves even as do we. There always is the possibility that appeal, simple and direct, to the ego-ideal of the other fellow will be a most effective way of getting him to *live* in terms of it.

A large part of the strength necessary for us to trust our fellows can be found in the ability to give and to receive. Most of us take things without strain, but to receive graciously, without resentment or envy, is a skill few of us attain. Others of us are unable to give. Whatever we acquire, whether it be affection or property, often becomes so intimate a part of us that we cannot even share it, let alone dispense with it. Misers hoard much more than gold.

### ADEQUACY AND SECURITY

When, however, we are capable both of giving and receiving without fear, we feel adequate and secure. The formula now becomes: "Adequacy plus security equals *freedom* to give and to receive." Out of the strength that feelings of adequacy and security give to us, emerges the capacity to trust. Without this capacity, there can be little interpersonal effectiveness. Efficiency in living, as efficiency anywhere, is expressed by a ratio of input to output. Effectiveness in living is a direct function of what we put into our life. This is a full-time job; there is no hope for part-time effort.

These feelings of adequacy and security can be developed only by ourselves. There are no ready-made solutions or pat answers. This is a job only *you* can do. You can be helped, of course, but you can feel adequate and secure only by working at the task yourself. In this achievement, two basic attitudes are essential:

1. Recognize yourself as modifiable; you *can* change.
2. Recognize yourself as *part* of your culture; you *belong* with your society.

When we accept the fact that we can change ourselves, when we recognize the need for change, and when we believe

that we are a bit of all mankind, we have a chance of functioning adequately in our interpersonal relations. Furthermore, we obtain a sense of personal security when we make a selfless effort toward achieving a somewhat better world. We find personal security through nonpersonal behavior. More than this, we cannot ask.

A Vice-President and General Manager said to his Assistant one day: "The next time you see Bob, ask him how things are going." Bob was the Factory Manager, he spent his time "out on the floor," and was several organizational steps removed from the Vice-President. Consequently, their paths seldom crossed.

Later that day, the Assistant came into the Vice-President's office and said: "I've just seen Bob and, man, you must be psychic. Bob was about ready to burst. He talked my arm off. I feel that we got to him just in time. How did you know?" "I didn't know," replied the Vice-President, "but I did know that if I were in Bob's spot and the things had been happening to me that I know have been happening to him, I'd be about ready for the booby hatch myself!"

This is a "practical" example of living in terms of others and also illustrates its practical pay-off. *One* reason why this Vice-President is where he is lies in the fact that this consideration for the problems of his people has characterized his job behavior ever since he was a Junior Engineer in the design room.

If we wish to achieve nonpersonal behavior, we must treat the events of life as the external processes they are rather than to regard them as *reflections* of our own inner feelings. To "see life clearly and see it whole," we must remove the shackles of selfness and become free enough so that we can live *permissively*. We must learn how to live with, and in part, for others. We must accept fact unvarnished with our own fancy. This living in terms of others implies three ways of behaving:<sup>7</sup>

1. *Recognizing that "truth" is relative.*

This implies plasticity, the willingness to alter our plans when we encounter new facts. Historically, we know that

<sup>7</sup> S. Kraines, and E. Thetford, *Managing Your Mind*, New York, Macmillan, 1944.

"truth" has changed often and continuously. An illustration from the history of medicine is pertinent. Not too long ago, disease was held to be caused by an imbalance in the body "humors" and the sick person actually was further weakened by purgings and bleedings in efforts to bring these "humors" back into balance. Wounds were supposed to suppurate; "laudable pus" was considered a sign of healthy healing. Now, however, we know more about the role of germ and virus in disease, and we try to keep things as sterile as possible. Now, pus is evidence of undesirable infection and we do all we can to avoid it. Similarly, there are many still who hold to the out-moded concept that we are born to our station despite the evidence to show that we become what we have been trained to be. Thus, what we call truth is variable, truth is a relative thing, and what is true under one set of conditions may not be true under another. Whatever ultimate reality may be (and no man *knows*), that which we have lived by and accepted as truth has changed constantly. This we may expect to continue.

2. *Being strong enough to live by the truths we find.*

This implies the willingness to base our behavior upon knowledge and its resulting fact, without trying to warp either in an effort to make them fit a preconceived idea. Living by the truths we find means that we are willing to give all evidence a fair hearing and to ask ourselves: "How much am I basing this decision upon what I would like to have happen?" We always must check to discover how much of our judgment is a function of what we *want* to believe and how much of it is based upon the facts involved.

As illustration, suppose that you are "antimanagement." How much do you *know* about the issues at stake? What do you *know* of the role management plays in the industrial picture? With how many representatives of management are you acquainted and how well do you know them? What actual percentage of the profit dollar is paid to management members? Is labor limited only to those who "work with their hands?" Do you *know* anything about the National Association of Manufacturers or do you just dislike it? Actually, whether

or not you approve of the N.A.M. is quite unimportant, but it is vitally important that you know the bases for your judgment—whatever it may be. To do this, you must examine both sides of an issue, you must look for *evidence*, not suspicion or rumor, and you must not be taken in by verbal poultices however smoothly they may be applied. Remember how open you are to suggestion and insist upon the *facts*. You will never harm a basic fact by scrutinizing it, but you will find the half-truth and the sheerly propagandic evaporating under close examination. Keep asking yourself, "What is truth," and keep in mind that for us humans, "truth" is more likely to be found in what we *do* and less likely to occur in what we *say*.

### 3. *Maintaining new brain control.*

This implies that you should keep your cortex (new brain) in the driver's seat. Skill in behaving according to cortical dictation is obtained just as is any skill—through practice. However, the two principles previously described are essential first steps before this particular skill can be learned. Once you have recognized that truth is relative and have trained yourself to live by the truths you find, you will have made your first effective move toward realizing the potential within your new brain. Do not forget that the application of this potential to the problems of life is most necessary if you desire to live realistically. You will be able to attain the tolerance that is essential to effective interpersonal relations only to the extent that you are able to put your new brain to work. The process goes something like this: If you try to *understand* the aspects of living, you will be forced to wait a bit before you reach your decision. This period of delay that you thereby insert, between your recognition of the need for action and that action itself, is precisely what is meant by new-brain control. When you do this, you "*think* before you act."

In this last section, we have been trying to describe a philosophy of living that offers the possibility of assisting us in making our lives adequate and happy. In fact, this entire book has been aimed at a description of psychological man, comprehensive and accurate enough to help us in understanding our

basic natures. Upon such understanding, more effective ways of coping with life's problems can be developed. We have told man's story as it may be seen in the light of the knowledge man has accumulated, sincere in the conviction that only through the daily application of this knowledge can we remove ourselves from the shackles of traditional myth and superstition. Our thesis has been and continues to be: *We have available to us sufficient knowledge to permit us to live an adequate and effective life if only we are willing to accept this knowledge and to put it to work for us.* In large part, the problems that haunt us are direct results of our *refusal* to accept realistic interpretations of our behavior and of our insistence upon maintaining antiquated belief. We *know* the way to effective interpersonal relations, but we commonly miss it because of a tradition-bound fuzziness in our thinking.

That we humans may attain reasonable balance as we face life, nine principles have been developed.<sup>8</sup> These principles have been put to the test and found to work. Under the tensions and stress of war emergency, these rules emerged and proved themselves to be effective and efficient in smoothing out the most difficult of life adjustments. These principles and their implications for balanced living follow:

1. *The recognition and acceptance of struggle between the self and society.*

By nature, we are ego-centered organisms. Yet, if our lives are to be whole, we must somehow learn to respect the needs of others. We must build a consideration for these needs into our own interpersonal formula for living. Briefly, we are human animals at birth, but if our training is right, we develop into socialized human beings as we grow through the years. In a very real sense, we too have to become *domesticated* just as may the pup or kitten that we bring into our homes. In this domesticating process, we have to learn to relinquish the autonomy of selfness for the more personally restricting you-orientation of socially approved behavior. For effective group living, this is true for both dog and man. There is no virtue

<sup>8</sup> W. Menninger, *Psychiatry in a Troubled World*, New York, Macmillan, 1948.



in delusion nor bliss in ignorance. We may maintain belief in a thing false to fact but we cannot protect ourselves from the consequences of this belief. We may believe that there is no chair in a room but we can trip over the very chair just the same. We need fully to accept the fact that we are born neither rational nor social beings; by our nature, we are wishful, willful creatures that take on "human" characteristics only as a result of long and persistent *training*. What we are as adults, is what we have been trained to be.

2. *The recognition and acceptance of the facts of emotional conflict and of its effects upon the body economy.*

Recall, if you will, our discussion of the so-called "mind-body problem." Remember, we showed that we humans are *unitary* organisms and that the way we *feel* about things has a great deal to do with our behavior toward them. Remember that whenever opposing tendencies clash within us, the energy (tension) developed by this conflict often expresses itself in the guise of disease symptoms. If we are to live effectively, we must admit to ourselves something of the reality of the tensions that emotions-in-conflict can create. We must keep in mind the fact that we humans cannot live without conflict—even without pain. The price we pay for the socialized subordination of our egocentric natures to needs greater than self makes a certain amount of conflict inevitable. About all we have done in this entire book is to make a plea for an intelligent coping with these conflicts at the conscious and deliberate level of our behavior. We must recognize and accept ourselves as basically emotional creatures; as having natural tendencies to *feel* our way through life, and that the inescapable conflict between these natural tendencies and the external demands of social living makes us too easy a prey to neurosis. When we deny or repress our natural selfness, we but augment our conflict and quite effectively prevent ourselves from doing anything really constructive toward intelligent living.

3. *The willingness to grow with new ideas, new facts, new truths.*

Continuously, we have insisted that only in so far as we can incorporate accumulated knowledge into our life behavior

can we function adequately and effectively. Life itself has been shown as a process of constant change and when we humans attempt to countermand this, we but dwarf our own growth. Throughout our life span, there is pressing demand that we stay receptive to new things and that we keep our new brain working within the limits of time and space that may be ours. When we do this, we continue to grow with the times and we avoid the internal revolution that occurs when we only rail against them. Furthermore, while age we must, if we maintain an intellectual interest in the events of the day, we will not become *old*.

4. *The promotion of more effective individual, family, community, state, and national relations.*

This is an extension of the relegation of "selfness" to "otherness" that was implicit in the first principle. This rule insists upon the kind of cultural orientation, often discussed but seldom attained, that we call the "brotherhood of mankind." This *living with others* has been intimate in the ethical credos that we have from time to time devised yet have not been able to put it into actual practice. We, whether person or group, have been so engrossed in promoting our own welfare, or in asserting the superiority of *our* way of living, that we have had neither time nor energy to try to see things from viewpoints broader than our own narrow way. Only, however, when we are able to understand and to accept ways of living that differ from our own can we lay any genuine claim to rationality. Usually, we ignore the fact that our personal security is a direct function of our skill in interpersonal relations; only as we accept others and are, in turn, accepted by them can we experience real feelings of belongingness. The war-cry of "rugged individualism" is actually but a cowering in the foxhole of anachronism.

5. *The willingness to work together, as a team.*

Our culture insists that we live in groups. Therefore, we are fools indeed if we do not enjoy to the utmost the benefits of this group living. The values in such living are attested by the success of group therapy. The big advantage in group therapy lies

in the fact that the *commonality* of personal problems becomes apparent and we, as a person, do not feel so alone; so individually discriminated against. Furthermore, we also discover that there are many ways by which "our" problems may be attacked. We find out about the strength that lies in alternate hypothesis and varied approach. Beyond this are the values inherent in group discussion. It quite clearly has been shown that more accurate decisions result through joint effort than may be obtained by the activity of any one person alone. However, there is danger here as well as advantage.

We see once more that no single way is either all good or yet entirely evil. Group discussion has tremendous value in clarifying individual thinking, but it does not follow that the majority is right. In fact, it can be shown historically that the majority usually has been wrong. For group discussion, like any human thinking, to be effective, there must be factual information on which this discussion can be based. Remember, there is nothing whatsoever to prevent any group from working in total ignorance *unless* pertinent facts are available, are recognized, and are accepted. If teamwork is to *work*, it must be preceded by a search for the facts involved, and the subsequent discussion must be guided by these facts. There is no virtue in "many minds" unless these minds are informed as well as numerous.

6. *The willingness not only to be led, but to lead when necessary.*

The first leaders whom we learn to follow are our parents. From them, we develop those leader-follower relationships that may characterize our lives. Our feeling toward authority and our reaction to it commonly springs from the parent-child relations that existed in our homes. There is abundant evidence to indicate (and we have looked at much of it) that our attitude toward leadership as well as the kind of leader we readily will follow largely is conditioned by the kind of training we have been given.

Whatever our personal feelings about leadership-follower-ship relations may be, we must recognize that much of our effectiveness and happiness in life is found within our willing-

ness to accept and to delegate responsibility. We should be able to follow readily and without resentment whenever due process or the needs of emergency place leadership in the hands of another person. Similarly, we should be willing to accept the responsibility of leadership position ourselves whenever we are elected to do so or whenever the demands of the moment insist that we take over. It should be apparent that this willingness to go along or to lead as the situation may dictate is but another aspect of the square facing of fact that we have shown to be basic to realistic living.

All of this implies an active interest in leadership functions within our culture itself. Despite "pressure groups," "lobbyists," and other efforts to influence leadership along paths of individual interests, we must develop and maintain an active part in leadership selection. Whenever we "let George do it," we are simply asking special interests to determine our future for us. We must always remember that confidence in the leader is the first essential to efficient group action. The best way to develop this feeling of confidence is to have taken an active part in deciding who the leader shall be. If you cannot activate yourself because you personally *want* to, keep in mind that the best guarantee of authoritarian leadership is an apathetic public. If you, through your behavior, indicate that you "don't care," why should those who obtain positions of power have any care for you? So long as we actively *do* something about our prospective leaders, just so long will we have a measure of control over them. In our culture, effective leadership is a reciprocal relationship in which our leaders meet as best they can the needs of those who have given them their positions of trust.

7. *The recognition of the need for purpose and goal in our vocational lives.*

When we discussed the vocational life, we stressed the need of planning in our working career. In such planning, the clear recognition of the "why" of our proposed work becomes important. It is essential to our general health and to our living effectiveness that we should foresee as clearly as we may where we are going in our work. This foresight helps us to under-

stand *why* we are doing whatever it is that we must do. The sharper our foresight, the smoother our life path.

We have stressed that to live is to struggle. We cannot escape a certain amount of frustration and disappointment. Since this is true, we can be greatly helped over these inevitable hurdles when we actively *want to do* the life task we have set for ourselves. Toward this end, we must make use of the potential our new brain has to offer and utilize all available techniques that can aid us as we enter a vocation. Furthermore, we need to see *how* this job is going to get us what we have decided we want from life. The adequacy and the strength of our personalities can be measured by the determination we display in the willingness we show to *work* toward goals we know we can attain. When we strive for goals we *want* without any reasonable assurance that we have what it takes to achieve them, we but express an emotional wishfulness that will bring us only frustration and regret. When we have no goal at all, but are living in a vague hopefulness that "something will turn up," we engage in fruitless and foolish endeavor. We can be quite accurately measured by the goals we strive for and by the *extent of our awareness of the probabilities for our success*.

8. *The willingness and ability to play.*

Many of the problems that torment us occur because we fail really to *do* anything about them. Similarly, when we refuse to play, we set psychological snares for ourselves. Playing is doing something and our happiness itself resides in our ability to *do* in life. Working without its healing counterpart of playing leaves us dull, irritable, frustrated, and dwarfed.

A highly effective outlet, perhaps the only truly effective one, for the unexpended energy emotion accumulates within us is adequate and enjoyable recreation. Play *recreates* indeed. It helps us to expend the pent-up energies that life frustrations develop and to renew our zest for living itself. Play need be nothing special; it need only be something we enjoy doing. It does not have to be active, such as handball, tennis, or golf. Play is equally effective when it occurs in the guise of bridge, scrabble, or checkers. The only really important thing is that

we enjoy doing whatever it is we are doing and that we play only for the game itself. If we "play" with only the thought of *winning* in mind, we defeat the whole purpose. When we plod through a game with only the intent of defeating an opponent or of establishing a certain record, we might just as well stay in the office or the shop. In fact, we might better do so. At least we have a chance of increasing the value of the estate we shortly shall leave if we put *all* of our effort into "gainful" occupation. To make a job of work out of a game is easy, but, if recreation is to be worthy of the name, we must know how to *play*.

Recreation, whether it be game or hobby, must be freely selected. To come home from work with all its pressures and to turn to something that we do only because we wish to is good and desirable. The complete freedom and autonomy we find in play is an essential aspect of adequate living. After all, play is defined as the doing of what we wish at the moment. In this play there is only one general rule: "What you do must not infringe upon the rights and privileges of others." Within this broad scope, however, play gives us opportunity to release some otherwise throttled wishes and restores something of our primitive autonomy to us. The value of an outlet for feeling for us who live within a rational technology should be apparent. No better outlet exists than frank, youthful play, *and* we should try to live a little before we die a lot.

9. *The development of the faith in mankind that is basic within a functional religion.*

Above and beyond an active participation in life itself, we need an active *faith*; faith in ourselves and in our fellows. We *need* to believe that behind the sham and hypocrisy we often see in word and action, there is basic goodness and fundamental humanity. If we do not *believe* this to be true, we are lost. Life then becomes a jungle, and there is little left for us as human beings. Therefore, faith in ourselves and in man in general is essential if we hope to achieve the reciprocal living togetherness that is intended by a functional religion. We *know* that we possess the potential abilities to reach this goal when-

ever we become willing to remove the blindfold that tradition and emotional thinking have placed over our eyes.

A religious credo, realistic and in line with the times, can be an important factor in our adjustment to life. Remember, that the doctrines of a liberal religion and of a practical psychology line up side by side. Within the faith in human fellowship that underlies both, we can find comfort, assurance, and *reason* for living. We find comfort in the fact that we are sharing problems with our fellows. We find assurance that we belong with them and that we are accepted by them. We find reason because we are working with them toward the goal of human betterment. When we orient our own living in terms of the needs of others, we are subscribing to the conviction that we should leave the world a little better place for our having lived in it. This is our charter, our membership card for belonging to the human race. The community of action this implies finds its rightful place within a realistic religion in which the dignity and integrity of man finds its most complete expression. Our lives are meaningful only as we share them with others. This, we can do. If we ever have loved anyone or anything more than ourselves, we already have had experience in *doing* the kind of thing that makes faith work. The very depths of meaningfulness in life are plumbed when each of us accepts the other person as a right sort of fellow. We find the basic material for this acceptance within the framework of a functional religion. This acceptance is the ultimate in our relation to our fellow men.

Success in life, as well as success with the problems of life, is reached by *working* at the job. If we wish to become less of a creature and more of a creator, we must apply ourselves to the task. Wishing and talking about it alone will but arouse unresolved tensions, we must get out and *do* if we are interested in a life as complete and as happy as our potential *can* make it.

Of all the causes which conspire to blind  
Man's erring judgment, and misguide the mind;  
What the weak head with strongest bias rules,—  
Is pride, the never-falling vice of fools.

—POPE, *Epistle to Mr. Addison*

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# INDEX

- Ability, 44
- Abnormality, 98
- Adaptation, 115
- Adequacy and security, 402
- Adjustive behavior, 45
- Adjustment, 99, 101, 119
  - attributes of, 120
  - cultural complexity and, 314
  - principles of good, 305
- Age, and attitude, 361
  - and bodily activity, 347
  - changes, 342, 365
  - and memory, 350
  - and usefulness, 374
  - and wisdom, 361

*See also* Old age
- Aggression, 151
- Allergy, 87
- Amnesia, 166
- Anger, 27
- Antipathy, 151
- Anxiety, 27
  - states of, 138
- Apathy, 162
- Appeal, emotional, 30
- Attitude, of indifference, 145
  - and old age, 345
- Authoritarianism and religion, 326, 337
- Authority and primitive thinking, 190
- Autoerotic practices, 221
- Autonomic nervous system, 91
- Autonomy of self, 161
  
- Balance, 102, 378
  - nine principles of, 406
- Balanced living, 101
- Behavior, abnormal, 124
  - adjustive, 45
  - alcohol and, 15
- Behavior—(*Continued*)
  - change, 333
  - child, 175
  - and desire, 14
  - development of neurotic, 129
  - emotional, 381
  - expressive, 111
  - non-adjustive, 45
  - problems, 175
  - socialized, 74
  - unitary, 77
  - variability of, 127
- Beliefs and education, 184
- Bronchial asthma, 87
- Brotherhood of man, 408
  
- Career, frustrated, 106
- Change, 346
  - of life, 366
- Child behavior and parent attitude, 175
- Christian way of life, 322
- Chronic suspicion, 16
- Church, 186
  - challenge to, 190
- Cleric and psychiatrist, 317
- Codes, ethical, 390
- Colitis, 86
- College professor, 180
- Common sense, 117
- Compulsiveness, 156
- Condemnation of man, 311
- Conditioned reflex, 72
- Conquest, 249
- Consistency, 114
- Control, 172
- Conversion hysteria, 7
- Counseling, 268
  - pastoral, 318
  - premarital, 240

## 416 *Index*

- Courage, 118
- Creativity, 351
- Credo, 336, 385
- Crimes, juvenile, 174
- Culture, 379
- Cultural complexity and adjustment, 314
- Cultural determinants of sex, 209
- Cultural influence on aging, 352
- Cultural perspective, 205
  
- Dead Sea Scrolls, 310
- Death, 301
  - and sleep, 363
  - world after, 302
- Decision, 108
- Delinquent parents, 175
- Democracy, 380
- Desire and behavior, 14
- Detachment, 163
- Dipsomania, 158
- Divorce, 231
  
- Early experience, 39, 121
- Earthman, 171
- Education, 179, 182
- EEG, 69
- Effective living, 380
- Effort and success, 285
- Ego-ideal, 25, 400
- Emotion, 4
  - and learning, 94
- Emotional development, 17
- Emotional habits, 30
- Emotional living, 7, 45
- Employment interview, 293
- Encysting, 360
- Essential hypertension, 80
- Experience, 360
  
- Facts, 173
  - and feelings, 196
- Faith, 337, 384
  - in man, 322, 412
  - and salvation, 189
- Fantasy, 34
  - flight into, 53
- Fatherhood of God, 304
- Fatigue, neurotic, 149
  - states of, 148
- Favoritism, 131
  
- Fear, 27
  - and the church, 327
  - of man, 19
- Flexibility, 383
- Forty-Plus Club, 355
- Freedom, 323
  - from taboo, 259
- Free will, 338
- Frustration, 23
- Functional living, 359
  
- Gastrointestinal disturbance, 84
- Goals, life, 386
  - occupational, 276
- God as supreme value, 330
- Golden Rule, 306, 400
- Good and evil, 394
- Good life, 338
- Growth and freedom, 326
- Guidance, 106
  - parental, 226
- Guilt feelings, 223
  
- Habit formation, 174
- Hate, 382
- Hermaphrodite, 212
- Heterosexual adjustment, 227
- Heterosexual interests, 219
- Home, 174
  - challenge to, 190
  - good, 104, 233
  - task of, 230
- Honeymoon, 256
- Human nature, 122
- Human relations, rules for, 287
- Hypertensive personality, 81
- Hypnosis, 68
  - and digestion, 70
  - and heart rate, 70
  - and skin change, 71
- Hypochondria, 167
- Hypothesis, alternate, 409
  
- Ideals and facts, 178
- Identification, 47
- Indian Summer, 382
- In-laws, 249
- Inner self, 25
- Insecurity and sensitivity, 309
- Insight, 19
- Insomnia, 270

- Integration, 113
- Intellectual development, 31
- Intellectual exercise, 349
- Intelligence and old age, 348
- Interest patterns and success, 283
- Interpersonal relations, 333
- Intolerance, 382
- Jealousy, 247
- Job, advancement in, 298
  - attainment of, 288
  - dissatisfaction in, 267
  - failure in, 286
  - intellectual ability and, 269
  - persistence and, 297
  - perspective and, 281
  - prestige of, 275
- Job selection, 263, 296
- Judgment, 115
- Juvenile crimes, 174
- Kleptomania, 158
- Knowledge, 66
- Laxatives, 369
- Leadership, 409
- Learning, 17
- Letter of application, 289
- Life, attitudes, 111
  - and death, 362
  - goals, 386
  - philosophy of, 108, 379, 395
  - problems, 170
- Logic and reasoning, 308
- Looking ahead, 372
- Love, hunger for, 135
  - incapability of, 250
  - as learned behavior, 240
  - romantic, 235
  - vs. infatuation, 237
- Maladjustment, 99
  - and sin, 319
  - and teaching, 184
- Manager, effective, 287
- Manias, 158
- Man, history of, 1
  - nature of, 9
  - potential of, 312, 337
- Marriage, 202, 229, 234
  - danger signs for, 247
  - happiness in, 238, 241
- Marriage—(*Continued*)
  - motivations for, 235
  - successful, 250
  - test for happiness, 245
- Martian, 171
- Masculinity, 206
- Masturbation, 221
- Matrimonial check list, 242
- Maturity, 322
- Meaning, 66
- Medieval thinking, 190
- Menopause, 366
- Mental health and religion, 323
- Mind and body, 64, 67
- Minded behavior, 65
- Missionary tendencies, 247
- Monster, 172
- Mothering, 39
- Mother substitute, 136
- Motivation, 315
- Narcissism, 52
- Natural phenomena, 212
- New brain, 13
- Normal, 98
- Normality, 99
- Neurosis, 125, 128
  - emotional determinants of, 381
  - experimental, 72
  - traumatic, 165
- Neurotic person, 128
- Neurotic symptoms, 144
- Neurotic trends, 13
- Nymphomania, 158
- Objective perspective, 398
- Obsessions, 154
- Occupations, 278
- Old age, 341, 357
  - attitude and, 345
  - enjoyment of, 364
  - and intelligence, 348
- Old brain, 9
- Original sin, 158
- Other fellow, 109
- Overprotection, 129
- Paranoid tendencies, 160
- Parasympathetic system, 93
- Parental attitude, 36

## 418 Index

- Parental guidance, 226
- Peptic ulcer, 83
- Perfectionism, 57
- Personal code, 391
- Personal insulation, 164
- Personal problems, 399
- Personality, valuable traits, 286
- Perspective, 109
  - and the job, 281
  - on self, 331
  - on sex, 204
- Petting, 255
- Philosophy of life, 108, 379, 395
- Phobia, 143
- Planning, 107, 356
- Play, 411
- Premarital counseling, 240
- Premarital preparation, 252
- Premarital physical examination, 253
- Premarital sex experience, 254
- Preventive hygiene, 347, 366
- Primitive magic, 178
- Principle of Organization, 307
- Problem solution, 107
- Projection, 50
- Projective devices, 112
- Progressive parent, 38
- Psychology and religion, 318
- Psychoneurosis, 128
- Psychosis, 128
- Psychosexual development, 257
- Psychosomatics, 77
- Psychotherapy, and attitude, 150
  - and the church, 313
- Puberty, 221
- Punishment, 31
- Pure reason, 199
- Pyromania, 158
  
- Rapport, 320
- Rationality myth, 22, 394
- Rationalization, 49
- Realistic philosophy, 108, 396, 398
- Reality, flight into, 56
- Reason and faith, 189
- Regression, 55
- Rejection, 132
- Religion, 303
  - authoritarianism and, 326, 327
  - commercialized, 316
  - contribution of psychology to, 331
- Religion—(*Continued*)
  - and crisis, 325
  - and culture, 325
  - liberal, 335
  - and psychology, 306, 330
  - and science, 307
  - traditional, 309
- Religious belief, 324
- Religious resurgence, 318
- Repression, 46
- Responsibility, 117
- Retirement, 356, 359
- Right and wrong, 31
- Rigidity, 383
- Romantic love, 235
  
- Safety valve, 18
- Satyriasis, 158
- School, 178
  - challenge to, 190
  - responsibilities of, 180
- Secondary values, 195
- Selective recall, 361
- Self-acceptance, 24
- Self-assurance, 294
- Self-knowledge, 21
- Self-perspective, 331
- Self-pity, 373
- Senescence, 342
- Sense of the comic, 109
- Sense of humor, 110
- Sermon on the Mount, 305
- Sex, 17
  - acceptance of, 203
  - cultural determinants of, 209
  - fact and fiction, 195
  - information, 200, 201
  - mutuality in, 260
  - perspective of, 204
  - premarital activity, 254, 255
  - realism in, 213
  - temperament and, 206
- Sex drive, 198
- Sex education, 199, 213
  - formula for, 258
  - and parent responsibility, 216
- Sex offenders, 198
- Sexual maladjustment, 257
- Sin, 188
- Skepticism, 108
- Skin disorders, 88

- Social inhibitions, 16
- Social isolation, 42
- Social outlook, 109
- Social skills, 121
- Social training, 385
- Socialized behavior, 74
- Soul probing, 381
- Spouse ideal, 251
- Stability, 102
- Status and security, 152
- Stress, 18
  - and religion, 324 ✓
- Substitution, 58
- Success, 387
- Suffering, 321
- Suggestibility, 393
- Suggestion, 394
- Suppression, 25
- Symbolic behavior, 27
- Sympathetic system, 93
- Sympathy, 135, 147
- Teaching, effective, 265
  - negative, 18
- Teachings of Jesus, 305
  - and human interpretation, 310
- Temperament and sex, 206
- Tension, 18
- Thalamus, 11
- Theology, 308
- Therapeutic attitude, 321
- Thoughtful consideration, 259
- Threat, 4
- Toilet training, 76
- Tolerance, 100
- Training, 17
  - institutions of, 25
  - transfer of, 390
- Traumatic neurosis, 165
- Trust, 401
- Unitary culture, 379
- Urticara, 88
- Vacillation, 51
- Value judgment, 171
  - and behavior, 328
- Variation in sexual pattern, 205
- Verbal solution, 178
- Vicious circle, 79
- Vocation, choice, 263
  - planning, 268
- White lie, 248
- Wisdom of the ages, 188
- Work, habits of, 284
  - satisfaction in, 273
  - unhappiness in, 262
- World view, 127
- Worry, 107, 386